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BY







Brooklyn Sweet Spot, Brooklyn



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Our annual directory of the world's top travel advisors, with specialists for every region and interest.



*A girl learns to knit at the Enay Abida Craft Center, in Harar, Ethiopia (page 34).*

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With a group of hotels, restaurants, and bars run by next-gen entrepreneurs, the Austrian capital is ready to let loose.

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Reader Zoe Osborne catches her partner drinking yak-butter tea on an exhilarating trek through the Nepalese Himalayas.

### ON THE COVER

Palm trees at Southlands Beach, in Bermuda (page 30). Photograph by Meredith Andrews.



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# CONTRIBUTORS

## 1. *Peter Terzian*

AN AUTUMN SONATA (P. 86)

T+L's own features editor grew up an hour away from the Berkshires, but rarely visited as a child. In adulthood, though, he and his husband, author Caleb Crain, have fallen for this corner of Massachusetts. "There's something gentle and accessible about the area," Terzian says. "The landscape is beautiful but in a quiet, subdued way."

## 2. *Meredith Andrews*

STRAIGHT FROM THE SOURCE (P. 30)

Bermuda-based Andrews already knew the subjects of her photographs for this story on young island creatives, some of whom are friends. But she was still able to explore less familiar areas of the small subtropical island. "It had been years since I traveled to Abbott's Cliff," she says. "It was great to return to such a lovely location and shoot my friend, influencer Rachel Sawden."

## 3. *Sarah Khan*

IN THE CITY OF SAINTS (P. 34)

"I went to Harar, Ethiopia, with the specific purpose of learning about Islamic history in East Africa," says the freelance travel journalist, who reports from every corner of the world for publications like the *New York Times* and the *Wall Street Journal*. "But once in the city, I loved letting go and roaming around the narrow alleys without a destination in mind—the walled city is a candy-colored fever dream."

## 4. *Maheder Haileselassie*

IN THE CITY OF SAINTS

Although the documentary photographer had been to Harar before, she uncovered a new side of the city while on assignment for T+L. "I was able to see the place and learn that it's about so much more than just colorful architecture," says Haileselassie, who's based in the Ethiopian capital, Addis Ababa. "Discovering the Enay Abida Craft Center, where traditions are passed on to local young men and women, was delightful."

## 5. *Leanne Shapton*

SKATING AWAY (P. 96)

The Canada-born writer and illustrator tapped in to her sense of nostalgia while skating and snowshoeing the frozen waterways of Ottawa on assignment for T+L last winter. "The canal skating was excellent," Shapton says. "But walking across the frozen surface of Meech Lake at sunset, being just a speck in the landscape, brought me back to my Canadian roots."

## 6. *Nicole Franzen*

AN AUTUMN SONATA

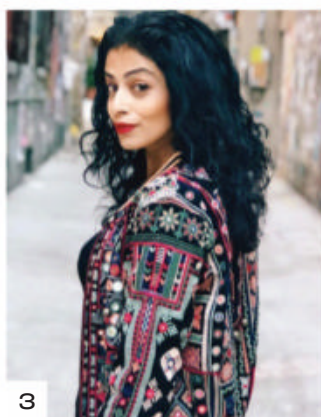
"I loved the Inn at Kenmore Hall," says the Brooklyn, New York-based photographer of her lodgings during her getaway to the Berkshires last October. "The interior is thoughtfully designed. It's full of objects that have been carefully collected over time by its owners, artist and restaurateur Scott Edward Cole and fashion designer Frank Muytjens."



1



2



3



4



5



6

CLOCKWISE FROM TOP LEFT: COURTESY OF PETER TERZIAN; COURTESY OF MEREDITH ANDREWS; MIKIYAS MELESSE/COURTESY OF MAHEDER HAILESELESSIE; COURTESY OF NICOLE FRANZEN; KATHY RYAN/COURTESY OF LEANNE SHAPTON; AMISHA PATEL/COURTESY OF SARAH KHAN

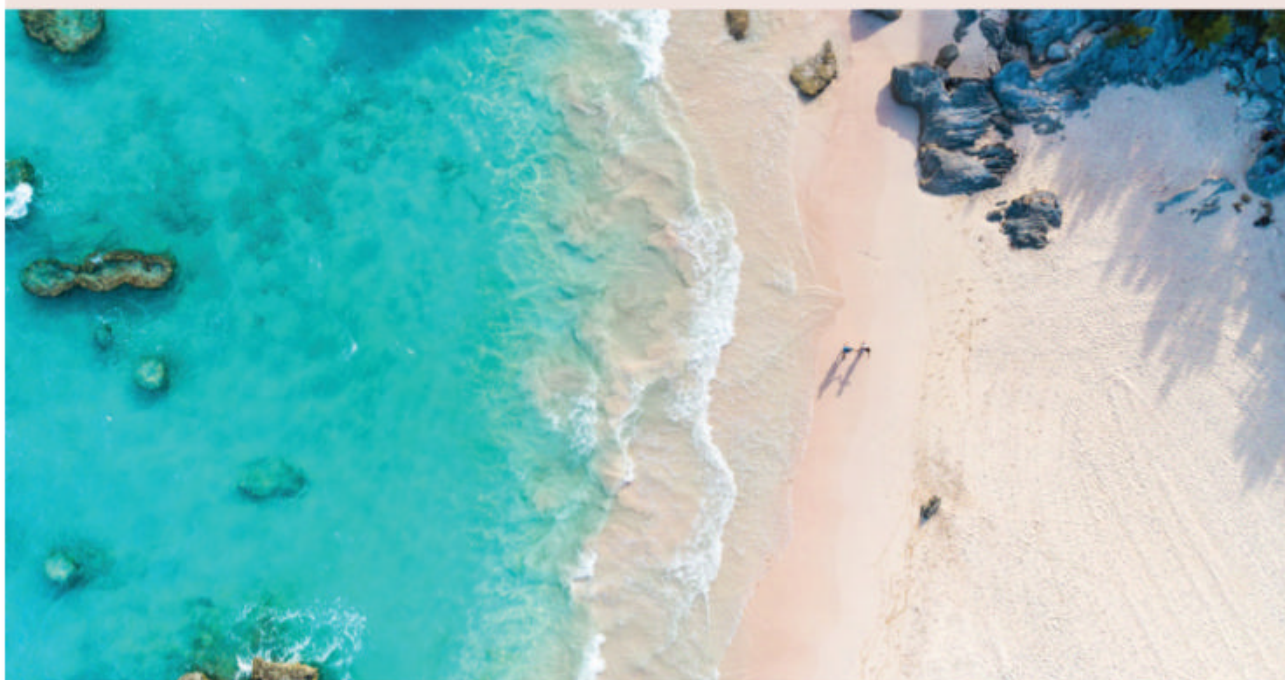




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## LETTER *from the Editor*

**T**HIS PAST SUMMER, my family and I had plans to travel to Greece and Italy. We wanted to go to Páros, to see what all the fuss was about: Were the beaches really that special, the pace that slow, the sunsets that amber? And then on to Lake Como, to breathe its sweet air, check in to a new hotel, and give my son his pasta and pizza fix.

Instead, the three of us escaped from New York—to New York. We went to Amagansett, to Montauk, and to the beloved Whitby Hotel, in midtown Manhattan, to which our little trio wheeled our suitcases the few short blocks across town. The distance wasn't so great, but I would argue that, in these strange times, the change of scenery was.

For two nights, we were surrounded by colorful artwork and fabrics chosen by Kit Kemp, a hotelier and designer I've long admired for her exacting attention to detail. And there, as if they'd always been a part of the hotel's DNA, were plexiglass screens, a thermal scanner, and a masked and gloved team, waiting to assist us and answer any questions. We even got to make our own pizza. Shocker—a New York slice is pretty fantastic.

Our industry is now rising to the greatest challenge it has perhaps ever faced, with humility, ingenuity, and speed—businesses have had to adapt quickly to survive. Their priorities are now making their guests happy and safe, two things that have never been mutually exclusive.

Which is why this issue comes at a unique moment for our *Travel + Leisure* team. After six months of working from home, we're just now beginning to see the world outside our own four walls. We are dedicated to giving you ideas—for the present and for the future. Perhaps you'll drive to the Berkshires, in Massachusetts, like our own features editor, Peter Terzian, did last fall, and check in to one of region's new (and outstanding) hotels. Or you'll eventually cross the border to Ottawa, Canada, where writer and illustrator Leanne Shapton discovered joy in the simplicity of ice skating. Or fly to Bermuda, where Jancee Dunn met entrepreneurs invigorating the island's culture. On page 56, you'll find our list of the top travel advisors in the business. When many vacation plans went awry last spring, these specialists worked around the clock to secure refunds and get clients home. They will be your advocates on the road.

But back to New York. Associate editor Hannah Walhout wrote about the wineries, restaurants, and incomparable beauty of the North Fork of Long Island, just two hours from Manhattan. It is places like the North Fork that give me reasons for hope in America—who doesn't want to support a region made up of small businesses, big dreams, and faith that hospitality, done right, will always leave a lasting impression?



★  
*Jacqui on the beach at Gurney's Montauk resort, on Long Island. Turn to page 22 for more on New York's resilience.*

### FROM MY TRAVELS

**The Whitby Hotel**  
([firmdalehotels.com](http://firmdalehotels.com); doubles from \$595), a darling of the travel industry, reopened in August. The indoor bar is still closed, but guests can now take a cocktail-mixing class in the shaded courtyard or on their own spacious balconies. The state-of-the-art movie theater is available as a private rental. We watched *Coco* with my son while snacking on popcorn, which made my phone and

TV suddenly seem inadequate. Other great city moments: a visit to the Empire State Building, where the views from the 102nd floor are more moving than ever; a trip to the Met, to see the armor; and a stop at the Central Park Zoo. On Long Island, my husband and I checked in to **Gurney's Montauk** ([gurneysresorts.com](http://gurneysresorts.com); doubles from \$595). Thanks to a renewed focus on families and social distancing, the scene has shifted from bottle service to lobster bakes. The staff worked incredibly hard, wearing masks and keeping up with requests. We had stopped going to Montauk once our barhopping days were past. This summer I found a reason to return.

@jacquigiff

Jacqui.Gifford@travelandleisure.com

*At the time of going to press, many countries, including our own, have border and flight restrictions in place. Unfortunately some of the businesses we mention in this issue may be temporarily closed, but we remain hopeful they will all return. We direct you to their websites for updates, as well as information on how you can help support their communities. Please continue to monitor the websites of the CDC ([cdc.gov](http://cdc.gov)) and World Health Organization ([who.int](http://who.int)) for further advice.*



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# Discoveries

A GLOBETROTTER'S GUIDE TO THE LATEST IN TRAVEL

Edited by SIOBHAN REID

## The Next L.A. Story

Culver City has spent decades as an under-appreciated studio town. Now it's ready to step back into a starring role.

BY JOHANNES LICHTMAN

*Simonette, the bar and restaurant at Palihotel Culver City.*



IN THE 1930S AND 40S, much of the Tinseltown magic took place not in Hollywood, but eight miles to the south in Culver City. The area emerged as a filmmaking mecca on the strength of *The Wizard of Oz*, *Citizen Kane*, and other movies shot on its lots.

The studio exodus in the 1960s and 70s left a void, and hotels and nightclubs formerly frequented by stars like John Wayne fell into disrepair. But in the past few years, the arrival of Apple and other tech companies has ushered in intriguing new spots that complement older standbys.

Last fall, hip hotel brand Palisociety converted a former boardinghouse into the **Palihotel Culver City** ([palisociety.com](http://palisociety.com); doubles from \$195), a 49-room boutique property with a buzzy lobby bar. It joined a longtime neighborhood anchor, the Renaissance-revival landmark **Culver Hotel** ([culverhotel.com](http://culverhotel.com); doubles from \$309), which regularly hosts live jazz performances and movie screenings.

In the neighborhood around the hotels, the main draw is **Honey's Kettle** ([honeyskettle.com](http://honeyskettle.com); entrées \$13–\$15), where chef Vincent Williams's ultra-crisp fried chicken has acquired a cult following. Other casual standouts have cropped up around it, including **Piccalilli** ([piccalillila.com](http://piccalillila.com); entrées \$13–\$32), which serves Pan-Asian dishes like five-spice pork with scallion roti.

A mile east are the strollable Arts and Helms Bakery districts. Contemporary gallery **Thinkspace** ([thinkspaceprojects.com](http://thinkspaceprojects.com)) shows works from rising stars like painter Frank Gonzales. The former Helms Bakery factory has been transformed into a hub for furniture and interiors-focused stores like **H. D. Buttercup** ([hdbuttercup.com](http://hdbuttercup.com)), which stocks an exceptional collection of vintage rugs, and **Arcana: Books on the Arts** ([arcanabooks.com](http://arcanabooks.com)), known for rare and out-of-print volumes on fashion, art, and architecture.

A few blocks west sits **Platform** ([platformla.com](http://platformla.com)), an outdoor mall that hosts pop-ups from such upstart brands as Little House Confections. Among the long-term tenants: minimalist men's lifestyle shop the **Optimist** ([theoptimistla.com](http://theoptimistla.com)) and **Bianca** ([biancalosangeles.com](http://biancalosangeles.com)), an airy, Italian-inflected bakery and café.

Decades of work by architect Eric Owen Moss, in partnership with builders Laurie and Frederick Samitaur Smith, have turned the postindustrial Hayden Tract into a neighborhood filled with wildly adventurous buildings. His most iconic contribution to



Clockwise from top: The Optimist, a luxury men's lifestyle boutique; green-papaya salad at Piccalilli; one of the green spaces at Platform; Honey's Kettle owner Vincent Williams.

date: the waffle-like tower built for chef Jordan Kahn's **Vespertine** ([vespertine.la](http://vespertine.la); tasting menu \$260), a Michelin two-starred dining experience that is either awe-inspiring or head-scratching, depending on whom you ask.

The tech boom—expected to bring as many as 10,000 employees to Culver in the coming years, leaving residents worried about traffic and rising rent—will continue to spur development. Next on the horizon: Ivy Station, a mixed-use complex with restaurants, retail spaces, and, ultimately, a 148-room hotel. Its completion next year is likely to signal yet another reinvention of the studio town.





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▲ Photos of quirky spots—like beach cottages in Oceanside, California, above, and a post office in Wrangell, Alaska, right—appear in the book.



## Where Life Imitates Art

The cinematic world of Wes Anderson has given rise to an entire visual subculture—one celebrated in a covetable new photography volume.

**BY CHELSEA STUART**

WHAT DO a casino at the base of Mont Blanc, in France, a symmetrical palace in Jaipur, India, and a post office in Wrangell, Alaska, have in common? They all recall the singular, eccentric aesthetic of Wes Anderson, the director of such travel-centric films as *The Grand Budapest Hotel* and *The Darjeeling Limited*. And they all have appeared on the popular Instagram account @AccidentallyWesAnderson, which was created by Wally Koval in 2017 to uncover whimsical Andersonesque locations around the world. Now Koval has partnered with members of his online community to release a crowdsourced coffee-table book, *Accidentally Wes Anderson* (Little, Brown and Co.; \$35). The book, which comes out in November, highlights photos of more than 200 attractions, the majority of which have never been featured on the IG page; each visual is accompanied by a description of the image by the photographer. “I hope it will inspire our followers’ adventures in a whole new way,” Koval says.

## Walk This Way

Founded in 1870 in Hobart, Tasmania, Blundstone is known for its durable leather work boots—sturdy enough to tackle the island’s wild terrain but chic enough to be worn on city streets. To honor its 150 years, the family-owned brand has released the limited-edition #150, which has special touches like a stamped bronze-leather lining and pull tabs with gold fabric. \$210; [blundstone.com](http://blundstone.com). —Hannah Walhout

► The #150, an update on Blundstone’s classic Chelsea boot.







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# Rum Renaissance

Long overlooked in favor of more “serious” liquors like whiskey or gin, this versatile spirit has had a resurgence of late, as premium distillers produce natural rums without added spices, colorants, or sugars. Together, they’re redefining this four-century-old industry.

**BY YOLANDA EVANS**

## EQUIANO RUM

Named after abolitionist writer Olaudah Equiano, this brand brings together two distilleries—Foursquare in Barbados and Gray’s in Mauritius—for the first-ever commercial blend of Caribbean and African rums. The company also has a charitable foundation and donates \$2 per bottle to freedom and equality projects around the world. [equianorum.com](http://equianorum.com); \$60.

## KŌ HANA KEA

Made from heirloom sugarcane harvested by hand on Oahu, Kō Hana’s *agricole*-style rums are shaking up the Hawaiian islands. Kea is the brand’s signature spirit: a superb white rum that’s great for sipping neat. [kohanarum.com](http://kohanarum.com); \$35.

## RON ABUELO CENTURIA

Panamanian distillery Varela Hermanos created this limited-edition rum to mark the centennial of the historic

Varela sugar estate. The blend, which includes 30-year-old rums from the family’s private stock, is aged in whiskey barrels. [ronabuelo-panama.com](http://ronabuelo-panama.com); \$140.

## TEN TO ONE CARIBBEAN DARK RUM

This smooth, bourbon-barrel-aged blend from Black-owned distillery Ten to One combines rums from Barbados, Jamaica, Trinidad, and the Dominican Republic. [tentooneerum.com](http://tentooneerum.com); \$49.



Clockwise from bottom left: Ten to One’s dark rum can be mixed in cocktails or enjoyed on the rocks; Kea, a white rum from Kō Hana; papa’a, or purple sugarcane, at the Kō Hana estate in Oahu; Equiano Rum in a “Burrell Daiquiri” created by cofounder Ian Burrell.



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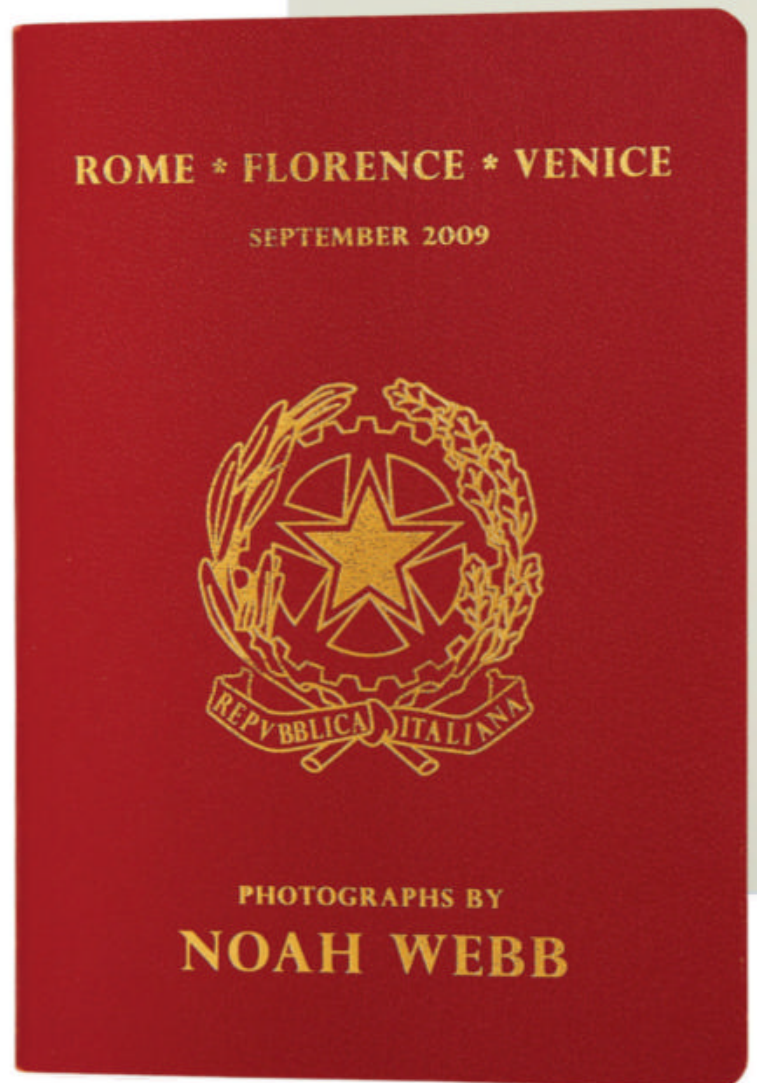
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Clockwise from left: Noah Webb's photo of a phone booth in Champéry, Switzerland; his Italy passport book; his husband, interior designer Clate Grunden, on a ferry in Venice; Indigenous activist Mónica Chuji in Quito, Ecuador; the Choi Hung Estate, in Hong Kong.



## Passport Status

Travel + Leisure photographer **NOAH WEBB** shares why, in this digital-photo era, homemade scrapbooks are still his ultimate souvenir. **BY SIOBHAN REID**

In 2007, Noah Webb traveled to Ecuador to shoot photographs for *Monocle*—his first professional assignment. He used both film and digital cameras to photograph the Indigenous activist Mónica Chuji, in Quito, then visited the coastal town of Salinas.

When Webb returned home to L.A., he wanted something tangible to help him remember the career-defining experience. So he pasted thumbnails from his contact sheets into 30 pocket-size notebooks and shared them with his friends and colleagues.

Their response was so positive that Webb decided to build upon the idea on

subsequent trips: a ski getaway in Switzerland, a tourism-board gig in Seoul, an editorial project in Brasília.

While Webb no longer shoots on film, he has continued to create “passport books” from his travels, each with 24 photos printed to the scale of the original contact sheets and housed in a colorful jacket that’s embossed with a passport-style stamp. And, just as with that first batch, Webb still gifts copies to friends and family.

With no imminent trips on the horizon, he’s glad to have the books as keepsakes: “It’s nice to have something that I can hold in my hands and really cherish.”

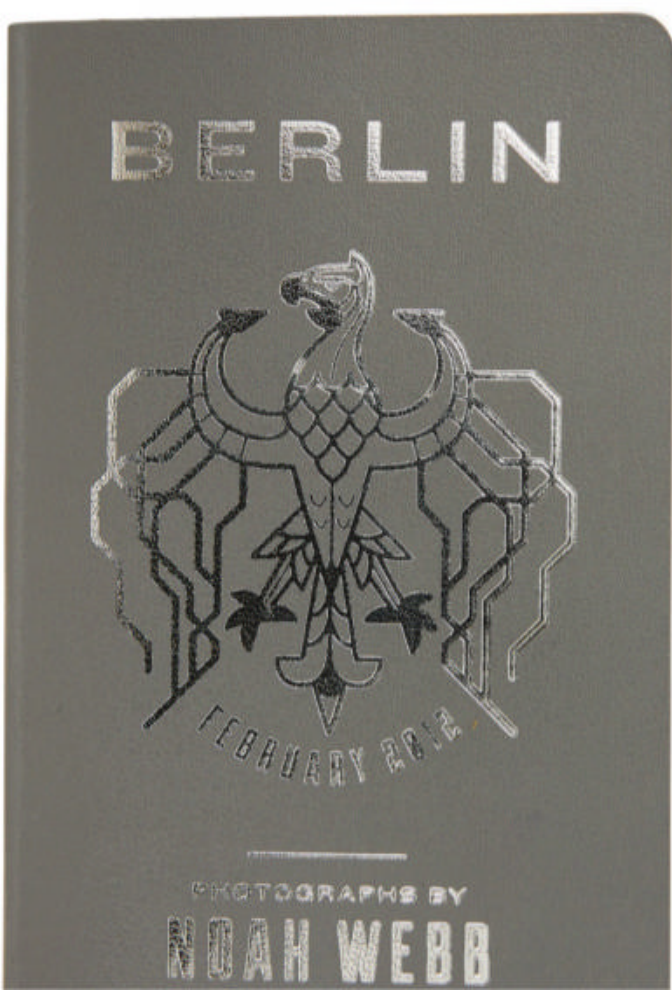


NOAH WEBB





Clockwise from left:  
A chalet in Champéry,  
Switzerland; a passport  
book from Webb's  
travels in East Asia;  
the Man Mo Temple,  
in Hong Kong; Rome's  
ancient Colosseum;  
Webb's Berlin passport  
book; a vintage car  
in Berlin; a view of  
the Cube Houses in  
Rotterdam, Netherlands.





TRAVEL + LEISURE

# Experiences

TRAVELERS' TALES, FROM NEAR AND FAR

Edited by LILA HARRON BATTIS & SARAH BRUNING

## ALL POINTS EAST

The North Fork of Long Island was always a sleepy place—worlds away from the big-money scene of the nearby Hamptons. But these days, more and more city dwellers are making the trek, drawn by the peninsula's rolling coastline, rambling vineyards, and hyper-local gastronomy. **HANNAH WALHOUT** joins in.

PHOTOGRAPHS BY CHRISTOPHER SIMPSON



## REASONS FOR HOPE IN AMERICA

LONG ISLAND—the snake-tongue sliver that juts out from the bottom of New York—is, as they say, a land of contrasts. On the western end, my end, you have the densely populated boroughs of Brooklyn and Queens. In the middle, tight city blocks give way to lawns and suburban sprawl. Then, everything gradually thins out until you reach land’s end: two spindly peninsulas, separated by the five miles of Peconic Bay. The famous one is the so-called South Fork, home of the Hamptons. The other one is different.

The North Fork has long been wilder, more isolated. While elsewhere on Long Island Olmsteds were planning urban oases and Whitman was writing about ample hills, it remained a land apart. Historically, those who have lived here—the indigenous Corchaug, seafaring English colonizers, whalers and clammers and itinerant farmers—have made their living off land and sea. A 2½-hour drive from Manhattan, the area was not entirely undiscovered by vacationers once New York City began to expand outward. But gentrified, it was not.

In recent years, though, boutique hotels, craft cocktails, and more than a few transplants from the city have brought increased attention to the North Fork, especially now that in-state travel has become the norm. Still, a connection to land and sea remains—and locals want to keep it that way. On a brisk Thursday night last October, I headed east to see how the enterprising community is keeping the spirit alive.

### FRIDAY

I woke with the sun at the **Sound View** ([soundviewgreenport.com](http://soundviewgreenport.com); doubles from \$236), just outside the town of Greenport. Built in 1937, this is the platonic ideal of an old-school seaside motel, with sun-bleached wooden buildings stilted over the water along a private beach. It’s also an emblem of the change that has recently come to

*Long Island Sound,  
as seen from a  
guest room at  
Greenport’s Sound  
View hotel.*





▲ Clockwise from top left: The Sound View's main building; dishes at the hotel's restaurant, the Halyard; Cedar Beach County Park, in Southold, with the Peconic beyond.

the area. After a 2016 purchase, the property's 55 guest rooms were given the requisite millennial update—subway-tiled bathrooms, pine-paneled walls—from Studio Tack, the team behind a new hotel in Greenport proper, the **Harborfront Inn** ([theharborfrontinn.com](http://theharborfrontinn.com); doubles from \$235). But the Sound View has also become a gathering place for year-round North Forkers, who stop by for Long Island wines and negronis on tap.

I migrated to the lounge and ate my continental breakfast by way of Brooklyn: chia-seed pudding, house-made cereal bars, and La Colombe coffee. *I know 20 people in the city who would move here tomorrow*, I thought as I watched the steely waves of Long Island Sound, waiting for my friend Ben to arrive for plus-one duty. *I hope that doesn't happen.*

One way people are maintaining local roots in the North Fork is through the terroir. With Ben in tow, I ventured out for a tour of **Bedell Cellars** ([bedellcellars.com](http://bedellcellars.com)), a 40-year-old vineyard and winery in nearby Cutchogue. Founded by Kip and Susan Bedell, it's now the domain of winemaker Richard Olsen-Harbich, who is something of a walking encyclopedia of North Fork viticulture. Over a juicy glass of Petit Verdot, he explained that this is one of the youngest wine regions in the U.S. When the area was planted, back in the 1970s and 80s, it didn't have the best reputation. "The tendency back then was to copy California," he said. "But this land is actually a lot like the Loire Valley, or northern Italy."

Vintners started consulting with their counterparts abroad, eventually pivoting to

grapes like Sauvignon Blanc and Cabernet Franc. Now, Olsen-Harbich says, "we're growing with a lot more precision and information and care." He recently helped develop the guidelines for the new Long Island Sustainable Winegrowing consortium. Twenty-three members, representing half the acreage of the region—including premier North Fork operations like **Kontokosta Winery** ([kontokostawinery.com](http://kontokostawinery.com)) and **Shinn Estate Vineyards** ([shinnestatevineyards.com](http://shinnestatevineyards.com))—have been certified for their environmentally friendly approach to soil health, irrigation, and pest control. "We're starting to become our own person, so to speak."

Ben and I returned to the Sound View, each with a few more bottles of Blanc de Blancs than we had intended to buy, in time for our dinner reservation at the **Halyard** ([thehalyardgreenport.com](http://thehalyardgreenport.com); entrées \$24–\$53). Like the rest of the hotel, the restaurant rests on stilts over the shore; the



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From left: The tasting room at Kontokosta Winery, in Greenport; a soup course at celebrated Southold-area restaurant North Fork Table & Inn.

dining room is paneled in dark wood in the style of an ancient whaling ship. The kitchen is run by chef Stephan Bogardus, who, at just 32, has already been cooking around Long Island for a decade. To Bogardus and his team, being of and for the North Fork means supporting the region's long-standing economic drivers: small-scale fishing and agriculture.

We ordered a crudo of meaty fluke, delivered that morning from the Southold Fish Market and layered with green apples, and a salad of lettuces and crunchy radishes sourced entirely from one nearby farm. The wine list, too, stays close to home. I sipped a 2018 white Merlot, citrusy and floral, from **Bridge Lane** ([bridgelanewine.com](http://bridgelanewine.com)) in nearby Mattituck as I looked out at the sound, which surrounded us in all directions.

## SATURDAY

The sea was still on our minds as we headed a couple miles east to Greenport and the **East End Seaport Museum** ([eastendseaport.org](http://eastendseaport.org)),

a cabinet of nautical curiosities housed in an old train depot. The docent, Althea Burns, walked us through the treasures: rusted harpoons, sailing-club pennants, heirlooms from the Floyd shipping family who made Greenport into a regional hub. My favorite was the huge Fresnel lens, built in the 19th century, that once lit up Bug Light, a nearby lighthouse. (The museum offers lighthouse boat tours May through October.) Boating here is truly in people's blood, Burns told us; during World War II, North Forkers patrolled the surrounding waters for German U-boats in their own repurposed vessels.

For lunch fresh off the boat, we walked a few doors down to **Claudio's** ([claudios.com](http://claudios.com); entrées \$22–\$55), a Greenport seafood institution founded by a whaler from Portugal in 1870 and listed on the National Register of Historic Places. Though it recently changed hands after nearly 150 years of continuous family ownership, by all accounts Claudio's is still Claudio's: you eat crackly Montauk calamari and lobster dipped in melted butter, and gregarious staffers drop by every so often with a crumb scraper and a Bloody Mary refill. Stephen Loffredo, who now co-owns Claudio's with his business partner, Tora Matsuoka, told me that the restaurant has long been a part of the formal *and* informal economy of the area. On top of supporting local fishing, he said, "bootleggers used to row up and deliver booze through a trapdoor in the bar."

These days, a decidedly legal operation can be found a short walk away at **Matchbook Distilling Co.** ([mdcdropshop.com](http://mdcdropshop.com)), where Ben and I met cofounder Leslie Merinoff for a tour and blending workshop. Merinoff, a Brooklyn émigré, had just come from the **Lin Beach House**







▲ The early-morning grape harvest at Bedell Cellars, a winery in Cutchogue.



## SUNDAY

We wandered down to the sitting room of the South Harbor Inn, a four-key B&B in Southold where we had checked in the previous night. Alex Azcona, who owned the property with his husband, Dan DeVito, poured us coffee and explained his long infatuation with the North Fork: “We visited right when we started dating and stayed at a beautiful B&B,” he told us. “So when it went up for sale, we bought it.” (The property has since been sold again, and is set to become a private residence.)

Azcona and DeVito have both worked for hospitality heavyweights like Mandarin Oriental and Four Seasons, but their pet project was refreshingly personal. It was the homesteading spirit of the region that inspired them to make the permanent move to the North Fork last year, Azcona explained. The inn occupied an 1897 house in a quiet neighborhood, and Azcona and DeVito took pains to preserve the original floors, doors, and moldings while filling the space with books and art from their own collection. “We didn’t even work with a designer,” DeVito added. “We wanted to create something that feels like home.”

We bid our hosts farewell and stopped for one last glass of wine at Mattituck’s **Macari Vineyards** ([macariwines.com](http://macariwines.com)) before making our way back to the city. The award-winning winery excels at pushing the North Fork envelope: its biodynamic approach involves herds of Longhorn cattle, and unusual bottles include the tart Early Wine, inspired by Austrian *Jungwein*, made from grapes harvested a few weeks ahead of schedule.

But Macari is perhaps best known for its Bergen Road red blends, produced exclusively from the North Fork’s best vintages. I sipped the 2010 Bergen Road—spicy, supple, and perfectly autumnal—as I watched a sea mist roll over the vines. From where I sat on the breezy patio, during that sweet window when fall is just about to round the corner to winter, vineyard and pasture were all I could see. ●

([linbeachhouse.com](http://linbeachhouse.com); doubles from \$454), the boutique hotel and cocktail spot she owns in town. She greeted us with a pour of North Fork watermelon eau de vie before instructing us on how to craft our own spirits using locally grown botanicals like lemongrass and coriander.

“A lot of young food and beverage professionals are moving here,” Merinoff told us as we walked through her laboratory-like space, where she mills her own grains and grows koji, a rice mold she adds to her whiskey instead of malt. In Merinoff’s experience, the way for newcomers to integrate into the North Fork ecosystem is to work with the people who are already there. “I love doing experiments with small farmers,” she said. “This year, we were able to grow our own ingredients and do everything biodynamically.” Matchbook is a community distillery, meaning individuals and businesses can make small batches, too; the Halyard recently partnered with Matchbook on its proprietary gin, which captures the North Fork with notes of lavender, apricot, and seaweed.

That evening, we headed west to dine at **North Fork Table & Inn** ([northforktableandinn.com](http://northforktableandinn.com); entrées \$24–\$75), a standard-bearer of the new North Fork cuisine set in a historic country home near Southold. Founded in 2005 by James Beard Award-winning pastry chef Claudia Fleming and her late husband, Gerry Hayden, it’s now helmed by chef John Fraser, who recently unveiled a renovation and menu revamp. Fraser honors the founders’ original vision, drawing inspiration and ingredients from the surrounding farms, vineyards, and waters. On a chilly autumn night, a local Pinot Noir and plate of Parisian gnocchi with rabbit ragoût was exactly right.

## PLAN YOUR TRIP

The North Fork is 2½ hours from New York City by car, but I opted for the **Hampton Jitney** ([hamptonjitney.com](http://hamptonjitney.com)), a local-favorite bus service that runs the length of Long Island. The area is also accessible via the **Long Island Rail Road** ([mta.info](http://mta.info)). Uber, Lyft, and local taxi companies are all available to take you from town to town.





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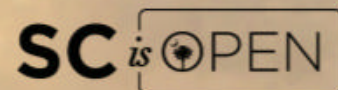
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## STRAIGHT FROM THE SOURCE

From an Instagram star who leads photo tours of secret spots to an herbalist who shows visitors how to cook what they forage, enterprising Bermudians are giving travelers an insider's perspective of the island's dynamic culture. **BY JANCEE DUNN**

**D**URING A CATAMARAN cruise off the coast of Bermuda, I fell into easy conversation with Kim Deuss, a young designer with sun-streaked blond hair and a lifelong passion for the sea. She grew up on the island, then, after high school, got her BFA from Parsons School of Design and worked for various fashion companies in New York. “I was like many Bermuda kids, who long to get off the island and explore the world,” she said.

But Deuss found the pull of home too strong, and last year returned to launch **Daughters of Summer** ([daughters-of-summer.com](http://daughters-of-summer.com)), a chic swimwear brand that uses fabric made from plastics and other waste retrieved from landfills and the ocean. “Bermuda is small,” she said, “so

we have this tight-knit group of creatives who are very supportive and collaborative, and that inspires me.” She gestures at the crystalline water around us, adding, “Of course, so does all of this wild beauty.”

Deuss is just one of the young Bermudians opening businesses in droves, and the influx is reenergizing the once-staid country. “There really is more opportunity than ever for folks to turn their talents and hobbies into self-employment,” said Genelle John, owner of **Salt Spray Soap Co.** ([saltspraysoap.com](http://saltspraysoap.com)). Everything from salt scrubs to body oils is handmade in the back of the brand's St. George store, using natural ingredients such as seawater that John collects from nearby St. Catherine's Beach.

“The days of having to stick to buying trinkets and T-shirts, choosing from a handful of hotels, and staying on the well-beaten path are long gone,” John adds. I witnessed this new energy firsthand when I visited her bustling, sun-flooded shop, where one employee was busy trimming magenta bars of Pink Colada soap (scented with pineapple, coconut, and lime) while the soulful voice of Bermudian singer Joy T. Barnum played on the record player.

▲ *Conservationist Weldon Wade keeps the invasive lionfish population in check on Southlands Beach.*





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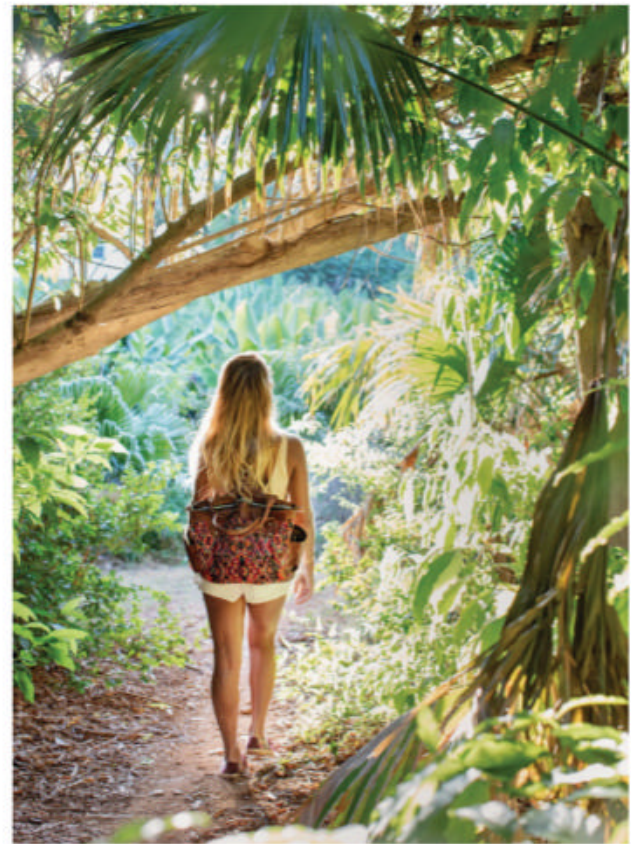
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▲ *Abbot's Cliff, left, is one of the under-the-radar spots to which Rachel Sawden, right, takes budding photographers.*

Myriad specialized activities and tours have also sprung up, ranging from the elegant sunset picnics thrown by artist **Lizzy Blankendal** ([eettafelbermuda.com](http://eettafelbermuda.com)) to the **African Diaspora Heritage Trail** ([gotobermuda.com](http://gotobermuda.com)), which explores monuments and historic sites connected to enslaved people brought to Bermuda from the West Indies and West Africa in the 1700s. One way to seek out these kinds of curated experiences is through the travel website **Winnow** ([winnow.life/kiosk/vsc](http://winnow.life/kiosk/vsc)), cofounded by Alison Swan. Among its most



popular listings: the four-hour insider photo tour led by photographer, model, and Instagram star Rachel Sawden. “Some of my favorite places are the ones even many locals don’t know about, like secret islands, or a scenic spot I found on Abbot’s Cliff,” she said as we explored the gorgeous pink-sand beach at Frick’s Point.

Bermuda’s reputation as an adventure destination is also growing. More than 300 shipwrecks can be explored in the reefs off its coast, and other aquatic pursuits include cliff jumping and helmet diving (which involves walking along the ocean floor while wearing glass-sided headgear attached to an oxygen hose).

“Jumping off the docks and rocks is a Bermudian pastime,” conservationist and free diver Weldon Wade told me. “We also have the healthiest, most abundant reef in the region.” Through his organization **Guardians of the Reef** ([fb.com/guardiansofthereef](https://fb.com/guardiansofthereef)), Wade hosts an annual spearfishing tournament to tame the invasive lionfish population, as well as seasonal beach cleanups.

To observe wildlife on the open seas, travelers can join the **Bermuda Zoological Society** ([bamz.org](http://bamz.org)) aboard its research vessel, *Endurance*. A five-hour excursion



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on the gleaming-white, 45-foot boat offers the opportunity to see a cahow, one of the rarest seabirds in the world. It is known as a “Lazarus species”—thought to be extinct for more than 300 years until it was rediscovered in 1951 on the isolated and ruggedly beautiful Nonsuch Island, off Bermuda’s northeastern coast.

The country’s new energy also extends to its dynamic, ingredient-driven culinary scene, which is supported in large part by its dozen-plus farms. The **Birdcage** ([thebirdcagebda.com](http://thebirdcagebda.com)), a rooftop bar with pink chairs and dazzling views of Hamilton Harbour, uses mint and other foraged ingredients in its craft cocktails, along with locally grown passion fruit, allspice, and hibiscus. At **OM Juicery** ([omjuicery.net](http://omjuicery.net)), health-and-fitness coach Preston James Ephraim II whips up vegan burgers with his own special sauce, soup from homegrown pumpkins and squash, and a tart, velvety vegan blackberry cheesecake that I devoured in under a minute.

Those who want to get even more closely acquainted with Bermuda’s nascent farm-to-table scene can seek out **Wild Herbs N Plants of Bermuda** ([wildherbsnplantsofbda.com](http://wildherbsnplantsofbda.com); tours \$35, workshops \$65). Owner Doreen Williams-James, who leads 90-minute foraging tours, said: “People are truly amazed at what they can find here in Bermuda that’s edible.” So far, she’s made a list of more than 60 plants and herbs, which she showcases during cooking workshops that include courses like sorbet made with indigenous prickly pears.

The number of millennial visitors is rising, thanks to several factors. Affordable Airbnbs are plentiful, zippy two-seat electric rental cars called Twizys offer an easy mode of transportation, and a new visa program gives digital nomads the chance to spend a year working remotely from the island. Another plus: customs forms can now be completed online to whisk visitors through L. F. Wade International Airport, making the country that much easier to visit. Even Bermuda shorts are newly hip, featured in seemingly every runway collection, including Tom Ford’s.

To support the rising interest, older hotels such as the **Rosewood Bermuda** ([rosewoodhotels.com](http://rosewoodhotels.com); doubles from \$625), in Tucker’s Point, have gotten a stylish refresh. The reborn icon swapped its faded pink color scheme for a clean, bright palette punctuated by pops of deep blue. There have also been recent debuts, like the **Azura Hotel** ([azurabermuda.com](http://azurabermuda.com); doubles from \$370), which sits on a pristine



private beach but is still just 10 minutes from the capital, Hamilton. The property has 22 rooms done up in creamy white with floor-to-ceiling oceanfront windows that may afford glimpses—if you’re lucky—of migrating humpback whales.

“After being away from Bermuda and returning,” Deuss said as we towed off from our swim, “I’ve realized that this is my happy place.”

▼  
Doreen Williams-James gathers edible plants and herbs on one of her foraging tours.







## IN THE CITY OF SAINTS

On a journey to Ethiopia, **SARAH KHAN** wanders the ancient alleyways of Harar and finds a new link to her faith—one that makes even the most far-flung place feel familiar.

**M**Y FIRST GLIMPSE of Harar was through a late-afternoon haze, a balmy veil that blurred the pinks, blues, and greens of the old city's walls. It was a few days before Ramadan, and around every corner, residents were rejuvenating sun-blached façades with fresh coats of paint in preparation for the holy month.

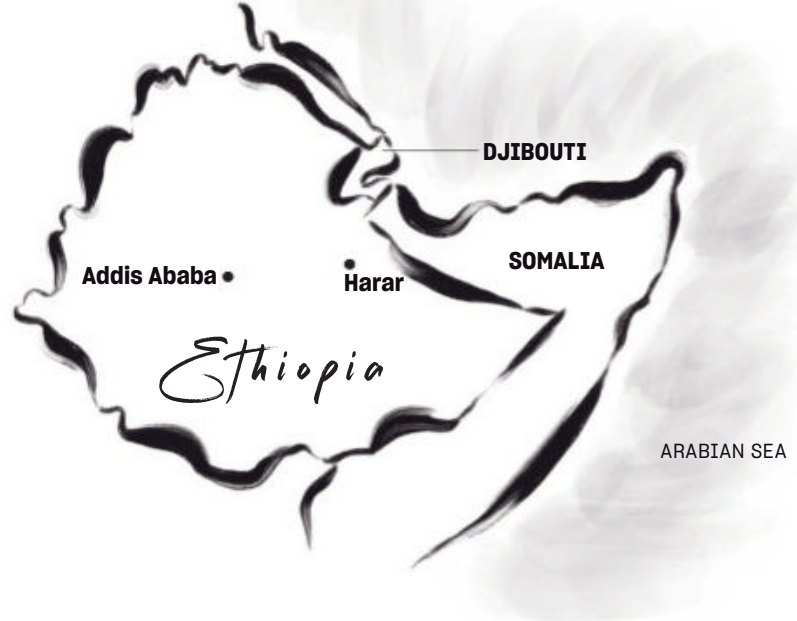
Harar Jugol, the labyrinthine walled quarter, seemed to twist the sunlight like a prism, beaming it out into a rainbow of lanes. One colorful path deposited me at a spice market perfumed with frankincense, berbere, cloves, and cardamom. Another led to a mansion with a grand exterior of mahogany and stained glass. It had wood carvings of the Hindu gods Krishna and Ganesh over the threshold, a legacy of the Indian merchant who built the home.

*A woman walks through Harar Jugol, the ancient walled heart of the city.*

Elsewhere in the medina, I took respite from the heat under a sycamore tree and murmured a prayer at the tomb of Harar's patron saint, Sheikh Abadir. A stroll down Mekina Girgir—a street that gets its onomatopoeic name from the rhythmic rattle of sewing machines—ended at a busy square, where I caught a marching band parading past, led by a baton-twirling majorette.

When I began plotting a side trip from Addis Ababa, Harar hadn't initially been on my radar. I wanted to see the rock churches of Lalibela, the palaces of Gondar, the expanse of the Danakil Depression—but that dream Ethiopian itinerary required two weeks, and I only had two days to spare. Then someone mentioned a millennia-old walled town to the east, said to be Islam's fourth-holiest city. It wasn't what I'd expected to find in one of the oldest Christian countries on the planet, but then, the Muslim world is more





#### PLAN YOUR TRIP

Harar is a one-hour flight from the Ethiopian capital of Addis Ababa. On the ground, the city's mazelike layout and lack of addresses can make navigation tricky, so a guide is essential. Habtamu Bekele of **Adinas Agera Tour & Travel** ([adinastour.com](http://adinastour.com)) can plan both multiday Ethiopian itineraries and one-off city tours.

▼  
Street vendors frying bombolini in Harar's old city.

of a nebulous idea than a cartographic reality. As a practicing Muslim, I've found that Islam has become one of many lenses through which I see the world, as much a part of my travels as food or art. Whether I'm seeking out peaceful interludes at mosques in Buenos Aires or Minneapolis or exploring predominantly Muslim destinations like Zanzibar or Bosnia, I try to infuse my travels with a bit of local Islamic history and culture.

Many places vie for the title of Islam's fourth-holiest city (after Mecca, Medina, and Jerusalem), but Harar Jugol, founded by Arab traders in the 10th century, has UNESCO credentials bolstering its claim. It is said to have the world's highest concentration of mosques, with at least 82 scattered across 118 acres. The many shrines have earned Harar the nickname City of Saints.

Islam has been woven into the fabric of Ethiopia as long as the religion has existed. Fleeing persecution in 613 B.C., followers of the Prophet Muhammad sought refuge in the kingdom of Axum, in northern Ethiopia; when Harar was founded centuries later, it became an important locus for the faith in East Africa.

At sunset, the familiar Arabic summons of the *adhaan* swelled above torrents of Harari and Amharic chatter in the streets. *Hayya as-salah*, *Hayya al-falah*. Hurry to prayer, hurry to

salvation. I felt the joyful flutter of recognition.

At the Sherif Harar City Museum, I browsed coins from Axum, Austria, India, Great Britain, Egypt, and Italy—evidence of Harar's heyday as a trading hub. While the city has a handful of interesting museums, the better way to find traces of its multicultural background is by sampling its street food. One vendor fried falafel under a faded blue awning. Nearby, a woman bent over a basket of glistening samosas. A young boy plucked *bombolini*, piping-hot Italian doughnuts, from a cauldron, stringing them like pearls along a skewer. I had *ful medames*, a fava-bean stew, for breakfast, then stopped at a pharmacy to chase it with a macchiato.

As a crossroads where the Harla tribe, Arab emirs, European explorers, and Indian merchants converged, Harar appears frequently in the footnotes of history. Look up Haile Selassie and you'll find a nod to Harar as the emperor's childhood home (his onetime residence now houses the aforementioned city museum). Read about Richard Francis Burton and you'll learn how the British explorer breached the city—closed to non-Muslims until the late 19th century—disguised as an Arab merchant. Search for Arthur Rimbaud and there's a mention of the French poet's turn as a Harar-based gunrunner (the Arthur Rimbaud Center showcases his photos of the city).

On Ethiopia's tourist circuit, Harar has become known for its spotted hyenas—and the “hyena men,” who hand-feed raw meat to the wild animals, a tradition that began generations ago as a way to deter attacks on livestock. “Humans and hyenas have been living side by side for centuries,” said my guide, Biniyam Fiyato, as he led me to one of the city's feeding grounds to watch the nightly ritual. “Even when the walled city was locked, hyenas would enter through drainage holes and roam the alleys.”

At the sound of a whistle, dozens of hyenas slinked out of the darkness, their eyes lit by the headlights of idling vans. These feedings have become the city's tourist calling card, but the spectacle of it all left me wanting a last glimpse of Harar that was free of theatrics or artifice.

I found what I was seeking the next day in the 16th-century Jama Mosque, in the quiet hours between Zuhur and Asr, the afternoon prayers, when the hall stood silent. I prayed in solitude amid the white and green arches, reciting words I've repeated everywhere from Hyderabad to Honolulu—and now, Harar. No matter where I am, in a mosque, I'm home. 🌙



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*Clockwise from top left: The St. Jacques Gate, on the banks of the Charente in the city of Cognac; tartare with tomatoes and smoked dashi at*

*Poulpette; a bartender at Bar Louise; sampling Cognac at Hine, in the town of Jarnac.*

## RAISING THE BAR

Cognac, the corner of southwestern France best known for its brandy, has long held fast to tradition. But as young chefs, winegrowers, and distillers shake up the status quo, the region is learning to embrace innovation—without losing its old-fashioned spirit. **BY JASON WILSON**

WELCOME TO the turn of the twentieth century,” said my guide, Marielle Chopin-Pascaud, as I entered the tasting room of **Bache-Gabrielsen** ([bachegabrielsen.com](http://bachegabrielsen.com)), on a quiet street in downtown Cognac. As four generations of Bache-Gabrielsens stared down at me from black-and-white portraits, I sipped the double-distilled brandy that bears the name of this city and region. Blended from spirits dating as far back as World War I, the drink offered a complex taste from another era: rich, unctuous, with evocative aromas and flavors of well-worn leather, dark tobacco, antique furniture. It was the sort of brandy you’d imagine a man in a





smoking jacket might drink from a snifter while sitting before a roaring fire.

But as we descended into the cellars, we entered the 21st century. I saw Cognacs aged in amphorae, like the orange wines that have become the rage at natural-wine bars. Some were treated like bourbon, aged in American oak rather than French—a heresy in this tradition-minded place. “We want to be an audacious house,” Chopin-Pascaud told me.

That sort of quiet but radical innovation has become the norm. As a city, Cognac—which sits on the banks of the languid Charente, at the heart of the appellation of the same name—had always been a sleepy destination, the sort of place that rolled up the sidewalks at 10 p.m. A decade ago, while running up a hefty tab with friends at a local bar, I remember being asked to leave because the staff wanted to close early. In the aughts, a friend who’d moved from Paris nearly went crazy with boredom and fled.

But on the heels of the cocktail renaissance, people are seeking out spirits destinations the same way previous generations flocked to wine regions. Cognac is now a must-visit, much like Kentucky’s bourbon trail or the scotch whisky circuit in Scotland, and the city is responding accordingly. New accommodations are opening, including **Hôtel Chais Monnet & Spa** ([chaismonnethotel.com](http://chaismonnethotel.com); doubles from \$355), Cognac’s first high-end property. Beyond its gleaming glass-and-iron façade, limestone walls and wood beams recall the building’s days as a 19th-century brandy cellar.

The restaurant and bar landscape is shifting, too. **Poulpette** ([poulpette.com](http://poulpette.com); entrées \$21–\$32), with its steel accents and open kitchen, is a showcase for an ever-changing menu that blends southwestern French food—duck tartare, foie gras—with subtle Japanese influences. Cocktail spots **Bar Luciole** ([bar-luciole.com](http://bar-luciole.com)) and **Bar Louise** ([barlouise.com](http://barlouise.com)) riff on standbys like the Sidecar in ways that still honor the region’s namesake spirit.

All this new energy complements stalwarts like the Michelin-starred **La Ribaudière** ([laribaudiere.com](http://laribaudiere.com); entrées \$45–\$52) in nearby Bourg-Charente, where chef Thierry Verrat has been serving classical French cuisine for more than 30 years.

There’s also been a revolution in distilling, with craft producers breaking the stereotypes of what brandy is meant to be—and who it’s for. At Bar Luciole, I met Jean and Amy Pasquet of **Pasquet Cognac** ([cognac-pasquet.com](http://cognac-pasquet.com)), a storied house that has been in Jean’s family since 1730. They were hosting an oysters-and-Cognac happy hour with their new line of organic, younger brandies (labeled numerically as 04, 07, or 10 years, rather than with the traditional alphabet soup of VS, VSOP, XO, and so on). There were DJ sets, and not a snifter or smoking jacket in sight.

These smaller producers are stepping out from the shadows of the “big four”—Hennessy, Rémy Martin, Martell, Courvoisier—which together control 90 percent of the market. The giants have always run boutique tasting rooms akin to high-end jewelry stores, but even they have had to adapt. Last year, the 300-year-old **Maison Martell** ([martell.com](http://martell.com)) opened *Martell the Journey*, a multimedia experience with a 360-degree projection of vineyards, life-size videos of winegrowers and barrel makers, and interactive games that immerse visitors in the spirit’s aromas, sounds, and tastes.

#### PLAN YOUR TRIP

Most travelers fly in to Paris, then rent a car or hop the high-speed **TGV** ([snCF.com](http://snCF.com)) to reach Cognac, changing trains at Angoulême. It’s also possible to combine a few days in Cognac with a wine-focused trip to Bordeaux, about 60 miles south—contact T+L A-List travel advisor **Bob Preston** ([bob@globebleu.com](mailto:bob@globebleu.com); 347-696-1050) for help planning an itinerary.

▼  
*Guinguet, the rooftop bar at Hôtel Chais Monnet & Spa, in downtown Cognac.*





► *Master distiller Line Guillon-Painturaud in the cellar at her family's 410-year-old Cognac estate.*

There's still a slow, stately pace of life in Cognac that I admire: wandering the Jardin Public or taking the path along the Charente to the 10th-century **Château Royal de Cognac** ([chateauroyaldecognac.com](http://chateauroyaldecognac.com)), or exploring cobwebbed cellars where barrels of brandy have matured for decades. The newcomers aren't erasing the past—merely expanding the vision of what Cognac can be.

The appellation doesn't reveal itself fully until you drive into the countryside, past hundreds of vineyards that produce the (rather unremarkable) wine that, after distillation and aging, becomes an exquisite brandy. One of my favorite excursions is to Jarnac, a village on the Charente with cobblestoned streets lined with boulangeries and patisseries. At the 14-room **Hotel Ligaro** ([hotel-ligaro.com](http://hotel-ligaro.com); doubles from \$165), co-owner Caroline Rooney helped me plan a walking tour of the riverfront, which is home to some of the world's most important Cognac houses, including **Courvoisier** ([courvoisier.com](http://courvoisier.com)), **Delamain** ([delamain-cognac.com](http://delamain-cognac.com)), **Hine** ([hinecognac.com](http://hinecognac.com)), and **Braastad-Tiffon** ([braastad.com](http://braastad.com)). Between tastings, the sunny **Le Verre y Table** ([restaurant-leverreytable.com](http://restaurant-leverreytable.com); entrées \$27–\$34) was the ideal spot for lunch, with a lighter take on the local cuisine.

Near the town of Segonzac, I visited **Guillon-Painturaud** ([cognac-guillon-painturaud.fr](http://cognac-guillon-painturaud.fr)), an estate that dates to 1610 and is now run by Line Guillon-Painturaud, one of Cognac's few female master distillers. She's also one of the dwindling

▼ *The city of Cognac as seen from Indigo, the rooftop bar at Maison Martell.*



number still producing Pineau des Charentes, a fortified wine made by adding Cognac to grape juice that's just begun to ferment. We shared a Pineau that had been aged since the late 1980s, still bright and lively. "These days, producers need to sell more Cognac to meet demand," she said. "So there's little left for Pineau."

Farther east, in Gondeville, lies the estate of **Jacky Navarre** ([cognac.navarre@wanadoo.fr](mailto:cognac.navarre@wanadoo.fr)), known among Cognac producers as the last of the purists. Navarre's dedication to his craft is legendary, a point driven home by the bed next to the wood-fired still in his distillery. We tasted a Cognac made from grapes that his grandfather had harvested in 1925 and his family had bottled in 1975. For a spirits geek like me, it was a religious experience.

One of Navarre's finest bottlings, the stunning Navarre Souvenir Impérial Très Vieille Réserve Hors d'Age, could win an award for sheer number of confusing traditional terms on a label. "Instead of trying to re-create what the consumer wants," he told me, "I make what I want and like, and I hope the customer will like it, too." That attitude, of course, runs counter to the more innovative impulse that's on display elsewhere in the region. It's a tricky balance. Cognac doesn't want to lose its soul, but evolution is a matter of survival.

As I saw at Bache-Gabrielsen, balance is possible. One of the last Cognacs that Chopin-Pascaud poured was from the 1971 vintage—just a year younger than me—that had been aged in barrels for almost four decades. Sometimes, on rare occasions, very old Cognac begins to take on flavors of tropical fruit and flowers, and this one was practically wearing an aloha shirt. Sitting in the century-old tasting room, I found it to be both modern and classic, old and new. It was the opposite of buttoned-up, boring Cognac. It was impossible not to love. ●





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# Trips of a Lifetime

If you could go anywhere in the world right now, where would it be? We posed that question to our social media followers—and to the staff of *Travel + Leisure*—then tapped T+L's A-List specialists to help plan the perfect itineraries. From diving Australia's Great Barrier Reef to trekking in Nepal to sailing down the Nile in Egypt, these trips are the stuff of daydreams. And when the time comes, you'll have everything you need to make them reality.

BY LILA HARRON BATTIS AND JOHN WOGAN



# The Americas

I WANT TO GO TO...

## The Grand Canyon

What are the best stops for a road trip from California, and what luxury hotels should we consider?

— @funnyfaceforever1

THERE'S NO BEATING the Grand Canyon as a quintessential American road-trip destination, and the drive from the West Coast has memorable sights in spades. "I suggest a route that loops north and then south, with stops in Yosemite, Mono Lake, Death Valley, and Red Rock Canyon along the way," says A-List travel advisor and U.S. national parks expert **Melissa Ladvala** ([melissal@mtsobek.com](mailto:melissal@mtsobek.com); 510-831-7526).

There are no true luxury resorts within the park; Ladvala likes the historic **El Tovar Hotel** ([grandcanyonlodges.com](http://grandcanyonlodges.com); doubles from \$230), which sits right on the rim—you can enjoy morning and evening views without the crowds. About 25 minutes from the canyon, **Under Canvas** ([undercanvas.com](http://undercanvas.com); tents from \$239) has a secluded location, stylish tents, and nightly s'mores by the fire. For over-the-top indulgence, check in to **Amangiri** ([aman.com](http://aman.com); doubles from \$2,100) in Canyon Point, Utah—the team can arrange helicopter trips to the canyon, and the new canvas-topped suites at its **Camp Sarika** (doubles from \$2,800) offer all the luxury of the main resort with even more immersion in nature.

I WANT TO GO TO...

## Patagonia

Should I visit the Argentinean or Chilean side, and are there any great tours I should book?

— @sheilaindc

WHY CHOOSE? A-List member **Jordan Harvey** ([jordan@knowmadadventures.com](mailto:jordan@knowmadadventures.com); 612-315-2894), an expert on South America, suggests combining the two for the ultimate itinerary. "El Calafate, in Argentina, is insane glacier country, while Chile's Torres del Paine has jagged, multicolored peaks—and hikes to match." In Argentina, Harvey recommends an excursion to the Perito Moreno glacier in Los Glaciares National Park. **Hielo y Aventura** ([hieloyaventura.com](http://hieloyaventura.com)) offers intense trekking and a picnic on the ice sheet, while **Glaciar Sur** ([glaciarsur.com](http://glaciarsur.com)) can take you to glacier-view walkways and trails. In Torres del Paine, stay at **Patagonia Camp** ([patagoniacamp.com](http://patagoniacamp.com); doubles from \$1,600, all-inclusive) for access to guided hikes in remote areas. "It's what glamping fantasies are made of," Harvey says.

etime

FRANCESCO CAROVILLANO/SIME/OFFSET



# Africa

I WANT  
TO GO TO...

## Cape Verde

Ever since I discovered the music of Cape Verdean singer Cesaria Evora, I can't stop daydreaming about the place.  
— Siobhan Reid, Associate Editor

While it's an increasingly popular destination for Europeans, Cape Verde, a collection of 10 islands off the coast of Senegal, is still largely unknown stateside. While visiting all 10 islands in one go is too ambitious for most travelers, fans of *morna*—the soulful music genre with African, Portuguese, and Brazilian influences Evora is known for—will find a visit to the picturesque port city of Mindelo, on São Vicente, essential. Base yourself at the centrally located **Hotel Porto Grande** (238-323-190; *doubles from \$88*), which has a great pool and modest yet comfortable rooms. Every August, Mindelo hosts the **Baia das Gatas Festival** (*mindelo.info*), a three-day celebration of local musicians—heaven for any Evora fan who wants to gain a deeper understanding of the country's musical heritage.



I WANT  
TO GO TO...

## Egypt

It's been over 20 years since my last trip to Cairo, and I'm eager to see modern Egypt and meet the artists, architects, gallerists, and writers imagining its future. A classic itinerary combining Cairo with a Nile cruise could be just the ticket.  
— Jacqui Gifford, Editor in Chief

WITH THE OPENING of Cairo's **Grand Egyptian Museum** (*gem.gov.eg*) finally scheduled for early 2021, this is the perfect time to

plan a trip. Egypt travel expert and T+L A-List member **Malaka Hilton** (*mandersen@admiraltravel.com*; 941-951-1801) suggests spending at least two days in the city to visit the Pyramids and the massive new museum. Make your base the **Four Seasons Hotel Cairo at Nile Plaza** (*fourseasons.com*; *doubles from \$220*). "For the next five days, take a cruise in a dahabeah," Hilton says, referring to the pleasure boats that sail the Nile. **Nour el Nil** (*nourelnil.com*; *five-day sailings from \$1,419 per person*) and **Sanctuary Zein Nile Chateau** (*sanctuaryretreats.com*; *five-day sailings from \$1,000 per person*) are

▲ The 19th-century Mosque of Muhammed Ali, in Cairo.

excellent. "Both start in Luxor and end in Aswan, allowing plenty of time to explore the Valleys of the Kings and Queens and Abu Simbel, where Ramses II built his temples." Then it's back to Cairo to experience the city's modern side. Visit trendy cafés downtown and art galleries in the hip Zamalek neighborhood. There's also the Museum of Modern Egyptian Art, where you'll see work by artists like Ahmed Morsi and Inji Aflatoun, a painter and activist in the country's women's movement.



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# Africa

I WANT TO GO TO...

## Kenya and Tanzania

My wish is to go on safari in the Masai Mara and Serengeti! Giraffes and elephants have been my favorite animals since I was a kid, and to see them in the wild would be life-changing—especially during the Great Migration. What is the best way to tackle my first Africa trip? — @cmh830

“AN EAST AFRICAN safari guarantees giraffe and elephant sightings, not to mention the chance to see lions, leopards, and more,” says safari specialist and T+L A-List member **Liz Wheeler** ([lwheeler@micato.com](mailto:lwheeler@micato.com); 212-545-7111). She suggests this 12-day itinerary for first-timers.

Start in Nairobi, Kenya, where you’ll stay at **Hemingways Nairobi** ([hemingways-collection.com](http://hemingways-collection.com); doubles from \$370) and visit baby elephants at the Sheldrick Wildlife Trust. On day three, venture south to **Ol Tukai Lodge** ([oltukailodge.com](http://oltukailodge.com); doubles from \$278) in Amboseli National Park. There, you’ll see elephants, pink flamingos, and pinch-me views of Kilimanjaro. Then it’s on to **Elewana Loisaba Lodo Springs**

([elewanacollection.com](http://elewanacollection.com); \$1,000 per person, all-inclusive), in northern Kenya, in search of the endangered reticulated giraffe.

Close out the week in the Masai Mara. The new **Mara Nyika Tented Camp** ([greatplainsconservation.com](http://greatplainsconservation.com); \$1,000 per person, all-inclusive) is a perfect base from July to October, when wildebeests, zebras, and antelope follow the rains from the Serengeti to the Mara and back on their annual Great Migration.

Your journey ends at the expansive, amenity-rich **Four Seasons Safari Lodge Serengeti** ([fourseasons.com](http://fourseasons.com); doubles from \$1,120), a first-timer-friendly option in Tanzania’s Serengeti. From your room, catch the daily parade of elephants as they stroll to nearby watering holes.

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▲  
The northern lights over Otertinden Mountain, near Tromsø, Norway.

#### I WANT TO GO TO...

## Norway

I've always longed to see the northern lights. With so many options out there—cruises, guided tours, igloo hotels—what's the right way in?

— Elizabeth Rhodes, Associate Digital Editor

"I always start off by telling my clients that seeing the northern lights can be an uncertain, fickle endeavor," says T+L A-List member **Melissa Lee** ([mlee@royal-travel.com](mailto:mlee@royal-travel.com); 815-217-0610; seven nights from \$4,000 per person), a Scandinavia expert with Royal Travel. "To give yourself the best chance, choose a location with total darkness, distance from light pollution, and a latitude on or above the Arctic Circle." For borealis-

crazed clients, Lee plans stops of at least three nights in each place where viewing is likely, with outdoor activities that keep guests engaged while waiting for the spectacle. Norway's Lofoten Islands are ideal for photography lovers, with seascapes that reflect the lights and picturesque fishing villages with mountain backdrops. For a more off-the-grid adventure, head to the archipelago of Svalbard, about midway between the Norwegian mainland and the North Pole—it's the only place the lights are visible during the day. Not keen on a backcountry escape? Tromsø, in northern Norway, has all the cultural attractions and amenities of an urban getaway. But if you choose it as your base, Lee advises booking multi-hour guided tours to get away from city lights. Reindeer-sleigh rides, snowshoeing, and sailing excursions are especially memorable ways to see the show.

#### I WANT TO GO TO...

## Greece

We'll be traveling with our young son, and I would love to find a hotel with great childcare so my husband and I can have a night out.

— @travelwithkidsabroad

MOST RESORTS CAN book one-off babysitting for an evening, says A-List advisor **Christos Stergiou** ([info@truetrips.com](mailto:info@truetrips.com); 800-817-7098), but for a truly hassle-free trip, you want a place that offers innovative kids' programming—without sacrificing luxury. Stergiou is a fan of the newly refreshed **Elounda Peninsula** ([eloundapeninsula.com](http://eloundapeninsula.com); suites from \$265), on Crete. "This all-suite resort is less

of a hotel and more of a village," Stergiou says. "The atmosphere is upscale, but the hotel strikes a balance with its kid-friendly approach." The center of the action is the Kids Ark, a massive indoor-outdoor play space (water park? playground? garden? check, check, check!) with childcare and activities for all ages. Parents of infants and toddlers can request guest-room babyproofing before arrival and rent strollers and other gear; older children and teens can learn to water-ski and scuba dive. So while your son is keeping busy, you and your husband can sunbathe on the private beach, book massages at the Six Senses Spa, or just kick back in your suite, gaze at the Aegean, and revel in—what's that called again? Oh right, silence.

▼  
A private pool at one of Elounda Peninsula's two-bedroom suites.



FROM TOP: SERGEY LUKANKIN/STOCKSY; COURTESY OF ELOUNDA PENINSULA



# Caribbean

I WANT TO GO TO...

## St. Lucia

I'd like to sail around St. Lucia in a yacht to take in all the lush natural beauty. It would be a relaxing trip filled with fresh seafood, tropical drinks, and fun—plus visits to the island's sulfur springs.  
—@hella\_tl\_swimwear

“A CREWED CHARTER with the **Moorings** ([moorings.com](http://moorings.com); seven-day sailings from \$28,500) would be an ideal way of exploring St. Lucia and some of the smaller islands of the Grenadines,” says T+L A-Lister **Margie Hand** ([margie.hand@andavotravel.com](mailto:margie.hand@andavotravel.com); 334-395-8587). “Using Rodney Bay (a popular docking spot on the northern end of the island) as a base, you can take leisurely sails, go scuba diving at Anse Cochon, head ashore to hike the Pitons and dip your toes in the jungle-shrouded sulfur springs, or buy local produce and handmade crafts at Castries Market. Having your own yacht also gives you the flexibility to swim, snorkel, and experience the culture of the Grenadines on islands like Mustique, Mayreau, and Canouan.”

*Yachts docked at St. Lucia's Marigot Bay, on the island's western coast.*





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If you have a park-to-park ticket, you can climb aboard the Hogwarts Express in Hogsmeade and emerge in London's King's Cross Station in Universal Studios Florida. Just around a corner and through a secret brick archway is The Wizarding World of Harry Potter - Diagon Alley, where you can experience its mysteries, excitement and well-known establishments. Diagon Alley is a total mind-blower, complete with a dragon atop Gringotts bank that roars



and breathes fire. Universal Studios is also home to amazing attractions based on the Transformers, Fast & Furious, Illumination's Despicable Me, The Simpsons, Men in Black and the beloved E.T.

Universal's Volcano Bay is a water theme park unlike any other. Centered around the mighty Krakatau volcano are rides, slides and plunges that perfectly mix thrills with relaxation. A destination needs hotels, and Universal has eight, each super close to the parks with its own theming and amenities to fit every vacation style and budget. The newest is Universal's Endless Summer Resort - Dockside Inn and Suites, a coastal themed hotel that features two-bedroom suites that can sleep up to six. The next time you visit Orlando, take a vacation that really feels like a vacation. Think epic. Think Universal.



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# Asia+West Asia

I WANT TO GO TO...

## Nepal

I'm longing to travel to Nepal to see the Buddhist temples, go on a wildlife trek, and visit the capital, Kathmandu. — @ktnspkls

"NEPAL OFFERS extremes of climate and topography, flora and fauna," says T+L A-Lister **Carole Cambata** ([ccambata@greavestvl.com](mailto:ccambata@greavestvl.com); 224-765-4545), who recommends starting at Kathmandu's **Dwarika's Hotel** ([dwarikas.com](http://dwarikas.com); doubles from \$310) before seeing ancient Buddhist monuments like Boudhanath Stupa, the largest in Nepal. Chitwan National Park, meanwhile, "serves as one of the world's last refuges for the one-horned Indian rhino." In Pokhara, on the shores of Phewa Lake, "the boating, canoeing, and whitewater rafting are some of the best in the world." Finally, the city of Dhulikhel—and **Dwarika's Resort** ([dwarikas-dhulikhel.com](http://dwarikas-dhulikhel.com); doubles from \$440)—is the place to "admire the magnificence of the Himalayas, as well as the old town and temples."

▼  
*Rafting the Upper Seti River in Pokhara, Nepal, known for its world-class watersports.*

I WANT TO GO TO...

## Petra, Jordan

Do I need to book a guide? I'm worried about getting lost exploring the rock temples. — @yourhoodlawyer

A pro will help you make the most of a visit to this iconic site. "It's pretty much impossible to get lost in Petra," says **Jonathan Rose** ([jonathan@touringisrael.com](mailto:jonathan@touringisrael.com); 877-778-8644), an A-List member and Jordan expert with Touring Israel. "But a good tour guide provides color and depth of knowledge that guidebooks can't match." Plus, a guide can tell you which spots are worth a little extra legwork—and which are overhyped. "We get a lot of requests for Little Petra, but there's nothing there that you won't see better examples of in the main site," Rose says. Instead, he recommends a visit to Al-Dayr, the Monastery—it's an extra 90-minute trek up and down 850 steps, so it's best for those who are physically fit and spending more than one night in the area. "It's spectacular, second only to Al-Khaznah, the Treasury."



▲  
*Visitors in traditional Korean dress at Gyeongbokgung Palace, in Seoul.*

I WANT TO GO TO...

## South Korea

Inspired by the South Korean dramas I've watched for years, I want to visit Busan, Gyeongju, and Seoul to experience the culture, taste the local food, and see the beautiful scenery. — @arip3ndragon

ONE OF THE best ways to hit all of your requirements is on U.K.-based travel company Black Tomato's **Highlights of South Korea: Cultural Discoveries Old & New** ([blacktomato.com](http://blacktomato.com); seven-day trips from \$3,955) itinerary. You'll get private tours of Seoul's most beautiful historic landmarks, such as Gyeongbokgung Palace, discover the most authentic spots for *kimchi-jjigae* (a spicy stew), visit Busan's coastal Taejongdae National Ecopark (with its dramatic cliffs that cascade into the Korea Strait), and explore Korea's ancient capital city, Gyeongju, which will have you feeling as if you've traveled back in time. Black Tomato's guides can also provide behind-the-scenes tours of Seoul that focus on filming locations from popular Korean movies.





# Oceania



I WANT TO GO TO...

## New Zealand

After being stuck in my city apartment for so long, nature is all I can think about. To me, the South Island has always epitomized the true meaning of “the great outdoors.”

— Alisha Prakash, Senior Digital Editor

THE RIGHT South Island itinerary gives you the essence of what makes New Zealand so special, according

New Zealand’s Ahuriri Valley is home to the Lindis, a striking backcountry retreat.

to Christchurch-based A-Lister **Alexandra Stewart** ([alexandra@antipodeanluxurytravel.com](mailto:alexandra@antipodeanluxurytravel.com); 64-2998-33806). “Plan for two weeks minimum if you want to drive, which is the best way to see the landscapes,” she says.

Start off in Queenstown for its “stunning mountain scenery,” Stewart says. A visit to the Milford Sound fjord is unmissable for its rain forests and waterfalls, while a stay at **Minaret Station** ([minaretstation.com](http://minaretstation.com); doubles from \$1,470), a lodge with four tented suites on 65,000 acres within a valley in the Southern Alps, feels like being in your own world. Accessible only by helicopter, it’s near Lake

Wanaka and glacier-dotted national parks.

After Queenstown, head even further off the beaten track to the **Lindis** ([thelindisgroup.com](http://thelindisgroup.com); doubles from \$1,535). Bordered on three sides by national conservation land in the vast Ahuriri Valley, it’s known for excellent fly-fishing.

Stewart recommends ending the trip at Abel Tasman National Park, situated on the northern tip of the island. “Here, crystal-clear streams tumble down mossy valleys to join the ocean, and granite and marble formations fringe the headlands, which are cloaked in regenerating native forest.”

I WANT TO GO TO...

## The Great Barrier Reef

I’ve always wanted to dive Australia’s Gold Coast. Would it be better to get certified ahead of time?

— Sarah Bruning, Senior Editor

If you aren’t PADI certified, don’t worry—there are many highly qualified dive masters working in the region. One way to learn while you’re there is by booking a sailing on the new **Coral Discoverer** ([coralexpeditions.com](http://coralexpeditions.com); seven-day sailings from \$3,442) to the remote northern reefs, which remain the most untouched in the system. The ship accommodates only 72 guests, and the marine-biologist guides on board provide expert commentary and context on the flora and fauna. But if you’re crunched for time, stick to Port Douglas, on the mainland, and take a day cruise to the inner reef. Staying on shore allows you to experience other magnificent places in the region, including the Daintree World Heritage Rainforest. Book in at the newly renovated, eco-luxe **Silky Oaks Lodge** ([silkyoaks-lodge.com.au](http://silkyoaks-lodge.com.au); doubles from \$440).





# A LIST

**T+L'S COLLECTION OF THE  
WORLD'S TOP TRAVEL ADVISORS**

Edited by **PAUL BRADY AND PETER TERZIAN**  
Reported by **LILA HARRON BATTIS, SCOTT BAY, SARAH BRUNING, SIOBHAN REID,  
HANNAH WALHOUT, AND JOHN WOGAN**

*Batibou Beach, one  
of Dominica's finest.*

As the world gradually opens back up, we need travel advisors more than ever. With their extensive connections, these experts can help you find a secluded dream villa on a remote Mexican beach, arrange a private tasting in Napa's wine country, or orchestrate an intimate tour of Rome with a seasoned archaeologist. Working with an advisor also means that you can rest easy, because all of the nitty-gritty details—from staying aware of travel restrictions to hiring vetted guides and planning for contingencies—are in steady hands. In *Travel + Leisure's* 19th annual A-List, our editors showcase the specialists who can design your ideal trips in the months and years to come.

NOE DEWITT



## CALIFORNIA WINE COUNTRY

### Michelle Murré

Based in St. Helena, Murré is hyper-focused on epicurean getaways to Napa and Sonoma. A typical trip would include stays at iconic hotels like Meadowood Napa Valley, visits to pilgrimage-worthy estates including Kelly Fleming Wines and Promontory, and meals at hot-ticket restaurants like SingleThread. *No minimum; 917-664-1333; michelle@azurinetravel.com; azurinetravel.com.*

## CANADA

### Jennifer Lobb

Lobb is a pro at off-the-beaten-path adventures. A dog-sledding excursion to Lake Louise and a multiday journey through the rugged landscapes of British Columbia aboard a Rocky Mountaineer train are two recent favorites. *From \$1,000 per day; 262-490-5598; jj.traveldesign@gmail.com; no website.*

### Marc Telio

Vancouver-based Telio plans trips that combine out-there adventures with stays at the country's top wilderness lodges, including Newfoundland's Fogo Island Inn and Nimmo Bay Resort in British Columbia. He's especially passionate about working with First Nations leaders to identify responsible tourism opportunities within their communities. *No minimum; 778-372-5050; marc@entreedestinations.com; entreedestinations.com.*

## CANADA AND THE U.S.

### Amina Dearmon

Dearmon crafts trips that promote meaningful cultural exchange, whether those itineraries involve dining in a local's home or taking traditional dance lessons. Another growing area of interest for her clients? Trips closer to home that cut down on both travel time and environmental footprint. *From \$500 per day; 504-940-7005; amina@perspectivetravel.com; perspectivetravel.com.*

### Roxy Dukes

Dukes has arranged some epic backcountry holidays. Among them: a small-ship cruise to the remote Haida Gwaii archipelago, known for its distinctive subspecies and ancient spruce trees, and a visit to a private whale-research center in the Great Bear Rainforest of British Columbia. *From \$1,200 per day; 44-1285-880-911; roxy.dukes@steppestravel.com; steppestravel.com.*

## THE CARIBBEAN

### Louisa Gehring

Gehring is just as skilled at planning dreamy honeymoon getaways and multigenerational trips as she is at organizing monthlong solo adventures that span numerous islands. Lately, she's been recommending newly refurbished classic hotels, like Belmond Cap Juluca in Anguilla and Eden Rock-St. Barths. *From \$1,000 per day; 410-708-8688; louisa@gehringtravel.com; gehringtravel.com.*

### Margie Hand

She's quick to orchestrate adventurous experiences that will appeal to travelers of all stripes—whether it's touring a working coffee farm on St. Lucia, hiking through Dominica's Cabrits National Park, or going on a private snorkeling excursion in the Turks and Caicos. *From \$1,000 per day; 888-234-0046; margie.hand@andavotravel.com; andavovacations.com.*

## CUBA

### Chad Olin

His specialty is curating itineraries centered on cultural programming, like jam sessions with Latin Grammy-nominated jazz musician Roberto Carlos Rodríguez Valdés, performances by some of Cuba's top salsa dancers, and tours of must-see art venues like Havana's factory turned creative hub Fabrica de Arte Cubano. *From \$400 per day; 443-834-3186; chad@cubacandela.com; cubacandela.com.*



*The Delicate Arch at Utah's Arches National Park.*

### Joe Sandillo

This Spanish speaker organizes once-in-a-lifetime experiences in Cuba. A few past itineraries include a trip to Havana focused on genealogy, a corporate retreat to a family-owned organic farm on the outskirts of the capital, and an art-buying vacation with appointments at some of the country's top galleries. *From \$600 per day; 813-682-1959; joe@almazjourneys.com; almazjourneys.com.*

## HAWAII

### Marilyn Clark

Clark has explored all six of the major islands, so she knows the pros and cons of each. Recent trips she's planned include a multiday trek along the trails of Kauai, a volunteer vacation for a family, and a 50th-wedding-anniversary dinner on a yacht off Oahu. *No minimum; 844-339-1774; marilyn@lighthousetravel.net; lighthousetravel.net.*

### Christine Smith

Smith specializes in bespoke trips to less-visited parts of Hawaii. In the past year, she organized a reunion for an adventure-loving family that brought them to some of Kauai's wildest terrain, including the Kalalau Trail on the Na Pali Coast. *From \$400 per day; 706-543-3298; christine@globalescapes.com; globalescapes.com.*

## U.S.

### Lillian Rafson

Rafson excels at turning close-to-home and

long-weekend trips into memorable adventures. Pre-departure, her clients fill out a survey, noting their interests and travel history. Rafson then hyper-personalizes each trip, recommending cool breweries or bookstores, outdoor activities, and independent hotels in on-the-rise spots like Boise, Pittsburgh, or Traverse City, Michigan. *From \$200 per day; 412-298-6125; lillian@packupgo.com; packupgo.com.*

## U.S. NATIONAL PARKS

### Dan Austin

He's planned getaways to all seven continents, but his strong suit remains his own backyard. Montana-based Austin is a logistics ace who knows all the ins and outs of park lodges and pairs travelers with the perfect guides for trips to places like Grand Teton and Glacier national parks. *From \$700 per day; 406-671-6067; dan@austinadventures.com; austinadventures.com.*

### Melissa Ladvala

Thanks to her focus on the national parks, Ladvala has connections with some of the top hotels and outfitters. She has a particularly strong bench in the West, where she works with the Nevada-based adventure company Bindlestiff Tours and Under Canvas, the outfitter with high-end camp sites near eight heavyweights, including Arches and Yosemite. *From \$350 per day; 510-594-6018; melissal@mtsobek.com; mtsobek.com.*





San Miguel de Allende, Mexico.

## ARGENTINA AND CHILE

### Jordan Harvey

Harvey is a master at pulse-quicken itineraries, having planned trips that included rappelling on Cerro López in Patagonia and a penguin-spotting adventure on Isla Martillo, off the coast of Ushuaia, Argentina. *From \$350 per person per day; 612-315-2894; jordan@knowmadadventures.com; knowmadadventures.com.*

### Olivia Schellenberg

Schellenberg has a particular interest in the region's dramatic landscapes, and she often recommends out-there itineraries. Some of her favorite spots include El Calafate, where the stargazing is second to none, and the incomparable Iguazú Falls, on the border between Argentina and Brazil. *From \$500 per person per day; 978-904-1489; olivia.schellenberg@audleytravel.com; audleytravel.com.*

## ARGENTINA, CHILE, AND URUGUAY

### Maita Barrenechea

Barrenechea can pull off the seemingly impossible: sending guests to chef Francis Mallmann's private island on a hidden lake in Patagonia, closing a Buenos Aires street to traffic for a tango party, and getting travelers VIP access to the Argentine Open Polo Championship. *From \$500 per person per day; 54-911-6760-4060; maita@mai10.com.ar; mai10.com.ar.*

## BRAZIL

### Paul Irvine

With nearly two decades of experience in the country, Irvine knows Brazil's top outfitters—and its most memorable experiences. He's had guests touring Rio with one of the city's star chefs, flying over the Amazon with climate researchers, and chilling out at ultra-chic beach escapes in Paraty. *From \$400 per person per day; 800-690-6899; paul.irvine@dehouche.com; dehouche.com.*

## CENTRAL AND SOUTH AMERICA

### Emmanuel Burgio

For an over-the-top, ultra-luxe trip in Latin America, turn to Burgio. He once orchestrated a bar mitzvah celebration for more than 100 guests at Machu Picchu that was guided by Peru's former Minister of Tourism. *From \$1,500 per person per day; 301-263-6670; emmanuel@blueparallel.com; blueparallel.com.*

### Richard Leonardi

Leonardi is a jack-of-all-trades, and he can arrange everything from a rafting excursion through the Amazon's least-navigated stretches to a ballet-centric cultural immersion in Cuba. *From \$400 per person per day; 530-427-8605; richard.leonardi@wildfrontierstravel.com; wildfrontierstravel.com.*

### Beth Jenkins Washington

Washington is always seeking out new experiences. The Salta region of Argentina is

one recent discovery, and she makes this up-and-coming area accessible by working with her local partners to arrange for wine-tasting, hiking, and llama treks across salt flats. *From \$400 per person per day; 703-762-5048; beth@mccabeworld.com; mccabeworld.com.*

## COLOMBIA

### Marc Beale

Beale provides his clients with unrivaled access, pairing them with resident experts who share similar interests. Recently, he connected a professional photographer with local artists, who accompanied the client to some under-the-radar areas, like the deserts of Guajira, in the country's northeast, and the colorful Caño Cristales River near La Macarena National Park. *From \$450 per person per day; 646-736-7582; marc@amakuna.com; amakuna.com.*

## COSTA RICA, NICARAGUA, AND PANAMA

### Pierre Gedeon

Gedeon has done it all: he's planned vacations for families with young children and adventures for thrill-seeking solo travelers. One recent favorite of his? A private dinner for a family at the 11,400-foot summit of the Barú volcano in Panama. *From \$250 per person per day; 11-506-6016-8798; pierre@costa-adventures.com; costa-adventures.com.*

## ECUADOR AND PERU

### Allie Almario

Almario is a pro at logistically challenging itineraries, whether you want to go kayaking through the Amazon rain forest (with a private guide) or trekking to some of the most remote corners of Galápagos Islands National Park, where few visitors venture. *From \$500 per person per day; 800-545-1910; alliea@premiertours.com; premiertours.com.*

## GALÁPAGOS ISLANDS

### Erin Correia

Correia's local connections take visitors with an interest in sustainability and conservation behind the scenes. She's set up a tour of the Galápagos Ecological Airport—the first in the world to run exclusively on solar and wind power—and arranged a rare talk with the scientists at the Charles Darwin Research Station. *From \$300 per person per day; 406-540-1904; erin.c@adventure-life.com; adventure-life.com.*

## MEXICO

### Zachary Rabinor

Rabinor is all about personal connections and insider recommendations across the country. He's planned multi-destination surfing expeditions, heli-hiking trips between glamping sites in the Copper Canyon, and a 4 x 4 road rally through Chiapas. *From \$400 per person per day; 52-322-225-9821; zach@journeymexico.com; journeymexico.com.*

## PERU

### Thomas Robinson

Each of Robinson's itineraries is tailor-made. For a group visiting Machu Picchu, he organized a 1920s-themed murder-mystery party on Belmond's luxe *Hiram Bingham* train; for another, he arranged glamping near the ruins of the ancient Incan city of Vilcabamba. *From \$480 per person per day; 800-690-6899; thomas.robinson@dehouche.com; dehouche.com.*

## SOUTH AMERICA

### Jeaninne Sanz Bernay

A native Argentine, Sanz Bernay uses her deep understanding of South American culture to enrich her thoughtful trips across the continent, which have included tracing family roots in Córdoba, Argentina, and a pilgrimage through the Andes focused on traditional music. *From \$300 per person per day; 415-230-0261; jean@jsbjourneys.com; jsbjourneys.com.*





*The Sky Bike  
at Ecuador's  
Mashpi Lodge.*





*The Goddess of  
Abundance statue,  
in Rome's Piazza  
del Popolo.*



**THE BALKANS****Wanda Radetti**

Radetti loves introducing travelers to every corner of this region—in fact, she was the first U.S. travel advisor to organize luxury tours in Croatia when the country became independent. She can arrange the greatest hits (private yachts, Dubrovnik old-town tours) but also take you farther afield to wineries, Istrian fishing towns, and remote destination restaurants like Hiša Franko, in Slovenia. *From \$1,000 per day; 718-932-6893; wandasradetti@visitcroatia.com; visitcroatia.com.*

**Julia Shore**

Though she has visited no fewer than 121 countries, Shore still favors the Balkans. Her bespoke itineraries in Croatia and other former Yugoslav republics let her clients experience these regions through a luxury lens, as she frequently arranges private-jet tours and chartered-yacht expeditions. *From \$750 per day; 561-271-1774; julia@reidtravel.com; juliastravels.com.*

**THE BALKANS AND TURKEY****Edward Granville**

Granville loves setting his clients up with private yachts to experience the turquoise waters and sun-drenched islands around Bodrum and the Dalmatian Coast. His latest find: the four-cabin *Canaren*, a new motorized *gulet*, or traditional Turkish sailboat, available for charter in the Aegean. *From \$200 per day; 44-124-278-7805; egranville@redsavannah.com; redsavannah.com.*

**CENTRAL AND EASTERN EUROPE****Jay Ternavan**

Ternavan can plan all kinds of itineraries—from honeymoons to solo and large-group trips, like a recent family reunion in Hungary for 28 people. He tries to incorporate social interactions into every one; for a solo traveler in Croatia, he had his specialists on the

ground craft a bar meetup away from the main tourist crawl so she could experience Dubrovnik nightlife like a local. *From \$250 per day; 800-344-5785; jay@jaywaytravel.com; jaywaytravel.com.*

**CENTRAL EUROPE****Gwen Kozlowski**

Kozlowski regularly hits the ground in destinations like Austria and Poland to check out the latest flight routes, hotel openings, and cultural offerings. (Last fall, she spent eight days in rural Hungary on a scouting trip.) She's a pro at planning multigenerational itineraries—a growing trend, and one of her favorite ways to travel—and has an eye for activities that appeal to all ages, like outdoor waltz lessons in Vienna or a tour of the 1972 Olympic Stadium in Munich. *From \$400 per person per day; 800-633-1008; gwen@exeterinternational.com; exeterinternational.com.*

**Ellison Poe**

Poe identifies as a “travel therapist,” able to gauge her clients' wants and needs and prepare perfectly tailored experiences for any occasion. Fluent in French and German, she's comfortable designing multicountry itineraries that balance guided tours with plenty of unstructured wandering time. *From \$180 per day; 800-727-1960; epoe@poetravel.com; poetravel.com.*

**FINLAND AND SCANDINAVIA****Melissa Lee**

Lee has an abiding love of the Nordic countries and other far-north destinations like Greenland and the Faroe Islands. She looks for unique ways to experience this diverse region, whether it's a private stay at the newest ultra-luxury lodge in Finnish Lapland or summering like a local in Skanör-Falsterbo, the go-to seaside destination for the Stockholm culture set. *From \$500 per day; 815-217-0610; mlee@royal-travel.com; royal-travel.com.*

**FRANCE****Mark Bonte**

Bonte's clients can get a taste of the quintessential sights in lavish ways (think an after-hours dinner at Versailles with a menu by Alain Ducasse), but they'll also benefit from his up-to-the-minute knowledge of what's new and notable, such as the city of Bordeaux's submarine base turned immersive art destination, Bassins de Lumières. *From \$300 per person per day; 33-97-256-3900; contact@frenchsidetravel.com; frenchsidetravel.com.*

**Kathy Stewart**

Her vast network of contacts across the country can open otherwise locked doors, whether they're the gilded entrance to Versailles (where she gets clients in before the crowds arrive) or the humble gates of the Burgundy barrel makers, who supply the barriques for aging top Pinot Noirs. *From \$1,000 per person per day; 800-678-1147; kathy@butterfield.com; butterfield.com.*

**FRANCE AND SCOTLAND****Camilla Davidson**

Davidson's contacts across northern France and the U.K. give her access to moments that money can't buy, such as a private dinner in Edinburgh Castle, a fitting at the Chanel couture atelier in Paris, and a visit to one of the world's leading gundog schools—usually closed to the public. *From \$805 per person per day; 44-203-051-5165; camilla@noteworthy.co.uk; noteworthy.co.uk.*

**FRANCE AND SWITZERLAND****Bob Preston**

Preston knows his terrain, and it shows in his repertoire, which ranges from family trips with rock climbing and rafting in Alpine Switzerland to oenophile excursions at *grand cru* estates in France. Right now, he's excited about the renaissance of Lyon, capped off last year by the opening of the luxe InterContinental

Lyon-Hôtel Dieu. *From \$750 per person per day; 347-696-1050; bob@globebleu.com; globebleu.com.*

**GREECE****Petros G. Zissimos**

Zissimos, whose family-owned company has been operating since 1972, has noticed an uptick in clients asking for food-focused trips—and has responded accordingly, developing farm tours and private cooking classes with local grandmothers in destinations like Crete and Naxos. *From \$300 per person per day; 212-944-8288; pzissimos@hellenicholidays.com; hellenic holidays.com.*

**GREECE AND THE EASTERN MEDITERRANEAN****Mina Agnos**

Agnos can bring clients to their ancestral family villages, the legendary sites of Greek mythology, and hard-to-reach islands (preferred mode of transport: high-speed RIB). She is also knowledgeable about the broader eastern Mediterranean, from destinations like Cyprus, an up-and-comer for U.S. travelers, to perennial favorites like Egypt and Turkey. *From \$350 per day; 888-377-5483; mina@travelive.com; travelive.com.*

**Christos Stergiou**

Stergiou and his team at TrueTrips, who built their name on all things Greece, have now expanded to other Mediterranean destinations. No matter the ask, he's made it happen: a Jewish heritage tour for a 20-person academic group; a blowout Aegean vacation for a billionaire; even a 250-person Santorini wedding for the daughter of a longtime client. *From \$495 per person per day; 800-817-7098; info@truetrips.com; truetrips.com.*



## IRELAND AND THE U.K.

### Nicola Butler

London-based Butler has been immersed in the U.K. and Ireland's hospitality world since she won a coveted student internship at Thomas Cook decades ago. Her clients, often ultra-high-net-worth travelers, rely on her to plan one-of-a-kind experiences, but she's just as comfortable organizing a more modest family vacation or a quiet country getaway. *From \$670 per day; 44-776-680-6727; nicola@noteworthy.co.uk; noteworthy.co.uk.*

### Jonathan Epstein

Epstein splits his time between Atlanta and his company's offices in England and Ireland. He prides himself on his ability to design an itinerary around any theme his clients throw at him, whether it's touring Ireland with a focus on emigration and the diaspora or making one's own whisky in Scotland. *From \$500 per day; 404-812-9298; jonathan@celebratedexperiences.com; celebratedexperiences.com.*

### Siobhan Byrne Learat

Dublin-based Learat knows the right people all over the region and can introduce clients to locals of all stripes—authors, athletes, farmers, specialty-food

producers, even the owners of grand old estates, many of whom are happy to host for dinner or a stay. *No minimum; 353-1-288-9355; siobhan@adamsandbutler.com; adamsandbutler.com.*

### Ellen LeCompte

This British Isles expert, who has been planning across-the-pond trips for nearly 30 years, curates itineraries that combine urban high style with rural delights. She can leverage her connections to set up private atelier visits and chef-led market tours in London—then whisk you into the countryside for a garden-focused jaunt around Sussex or a lesson in herding with sheepdogs in the Cotswolds. *From \$600 per day; 804-910-0608; ellen@lecomptetravel.com; travel-xperts.com.*

## ITALY

### Joyce Falcone

Though her specialty is over-the-top luxury—complete with five-star-hotel stays and rarefied experiences such as sampling fresh ricotta in a Sicilian family home—Falcone is no slouch when it comes to adventure travel: she has hiked countless routes, from weeklong treks through the Dolomites to the footpaths of the Val d'Orcia that link iconic villages like Montalcino and Montepulciano. *From \$470 per person per day; 888-674-3311; jfalcone@italianconciierge.com; italianconciierge.com.*

### Matteo Della Grazia and Daniela Mencarelli

The married founders of Fuoritinerario—Discover Your Italy work to introduce travelers to the many faces of their home country. Their goal is to show their clients “the Italy of the Italian people,” which means anything from shadowing bakers at an organic *panetteria* in Perugia to a ranger-led trek in the Parco Nazionale d'Abruzzo to spot native bears and wolves. *From \$500 per person per day; 347-441-3907; matteo@discoveryouritaly.com; discoveryouritaly.com.*

### Andrea Grisdale

With a home base in Bellagio and 30 years of experience, Grisdale has the chops to arrange Italian itineraries both classic and unexpected. She can, of course, do a nighttime tour of Rome on vintage Vespas, but she really shines at setting up visits to less-touristed places, like Friuli, or meals with local political figures or former Vatican Swiss guards. *From \$600 per person per day; 39-031-952059; andrea@icbellagio.com; icbellagio.com.*

### Gary Portuesi

With deep roots in Italy and extensive knowledge of food and wine, Portuesi takes particular pleasure in planning trips with a culinary bent, like a Modena itinerary that included Shabbat dinner with chef Massimo Bottura and a private concert at the home of Luciano Pavarotti. *From \$500 per person per day; 917-868-4712; garyp@authenticitaly.com; authenticitaly.com.*

## PORTUGAL

### Gonçalo Correia

Lisbon-based Correia got his start as a tour guide—an experience that influences his work as a travel advisor today. Thanks to his connections on the ground, past clients have experienced major sites like the Pena Palace after hours and visited top vineyards escorted by some of the biggest figures in the Portuguese winemaking world. *From \$240 per person per day; 351-21-390-4208; goncalo.correia@toursforyou.pt; toursforyou.pt.*

## PORTUGAL AND SPAIN

### Nigel Hack

A home base in Spain's capital has allowed Hack and his team to develop relationships with locals across Spain and Portugal that are key to their inventive itineraries. Past guests have met with art restorers in Seville, top graffiti artists in Madrid, beekeepers in the Alentejo, and world-renowned chefs in Barcelona. *No minimum; 34-91-758-0063;*

*nigel@madridandbeyond.com; madridandbeyond.com.*

### Steven Vigor

Once solely focused on Portugal's Algarve region, Vigor has expanded his purview to the entire Iberian Peninsula. He's equally at home planning expertly guided trips to Lisbon's must-sees as he is charting an itinerary through the increasingly popular Azores. *From \$175 per day; 351-289-009-580; stevenvigor@iberian-escapes.com; iberian-escapes.com.*

## RUSSIA AND FORMER SOVIET STATES

### Greg Tepper

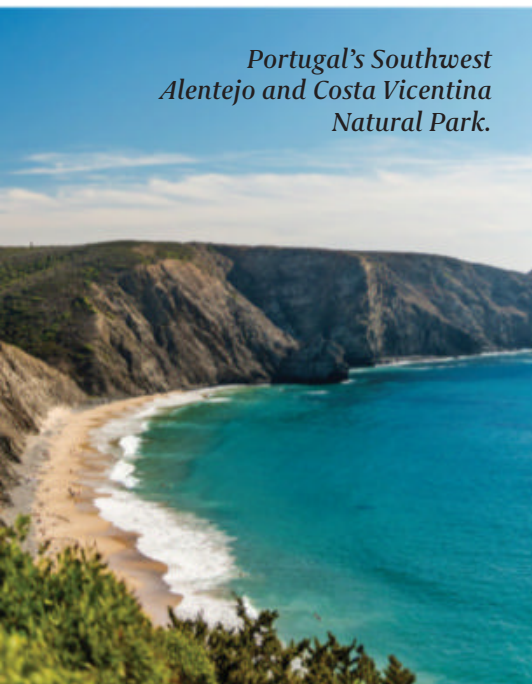
The founder of Exeter International has grown his company to include offerings throughout Europe, but as an advisor, he remains focused on his first love: Russia and the former U.S.S.R. A Russian speaker, he arranges exclusive experiences in major cultural centers—say, a private performance from the Georgian national dance company in Tbilisi—and more out-of-the-way destinations, like the Armenian countryside, the Silk Road sites of Uzbekistan, or the medieval towns of Russia's “Golden Ring,” northeast of Moscow. *No minimum; 813-251-5355; greg@exeterinternational.com; exeterinternational.com.*

## TURKEY

### Engin Kadaster

Kadaster worked for decades in the Turkish travel industry—as a guide, a tour operator, and even an archaeologist—before moving to California and cofounding Turkey at Its Best. Her deep knowledge of the country means she can design hyper-specific itineraries (A Potato Farmer's Tour of Turkey) and bring clients to under-the-radar areas like Sagalassos and the Lake District or the eastern Black Sea coast, near the Georgian border. *No minimum; 949-717-6784; engin@turkeyatitsbest.com; turkeyatitsbest.net.*

Portugal's Southwest Alentejo and Costa Vicentina Natural Park.



SIVAN ASKAYO. OPPOSITE: CHRISTOPHER CHURCHILL





*The village of Kangaamiut, on the western shore of Greenland.*





*Maples showing their  
fall colors at Kyoto's  
Tofuku-ji temple.*



**GAMBODIA AND LAOS****Andy Booth**

Based in Siem Reap, Booth is especially skilled at itineraries that help travelers avoid crowds and optimize visits to significant sites. At Angkor Wat, for instance, he utilizes footfall data to determine the best (and least-trodden) routes. *No minimum; 914-595-6949; a.booth@aboutasiatravel.com; aboutasiatravel.com.*

**CENTRAL ASIA****Zulya Rajabova**

Rajabova visits the region several times a year, always on the lookout for new experiences and new possibilities. She's particularly excited about the recent reopening of the Uzbekistan-Tajikistan border: now travelers can more easily see both Samarkand and Panjakent, two of the Silk Road's most majestic ancient cities. *From \$250 per person per day; 908-347-4280; zulya@silkroadtreasuretours.com; silkroadtreasuretours.com.*

**CHINA****Guy Rubin**

Rubin adds personalized moments to his journeys across China. For example, he once arranged private studio visits for a client with the Shanghai-based artists Chen Wenbo and Li Shan—two of the traveler's favorite contemporary painters. *From \$850 per person per day; 861-84-407-162; guy@imperialtours.net; imperialtours.net.*

**Mei Zhang**

Frequent trips to China keep Zhang up-to-date on the many new openings and emerging destinations within the country. Recently, that's included the Ningxia Hui Autonomous Region—where a dry climate has fostered a nascent wine industry—and Songyang County, renowned for its green tea and a growing modern-art scene. *From \$350 per person per day; 510-660-9418; mei.zhang@wildchina.com; wildchina.com.*

**INDIA****Carole Cambata**

Every region of India is comprehensively covered by Cambata, whether it's the country's buzzy cities—Chennai, Delhi, Hyderabad, and Mumbai—or off-the-beaten-track areas such as beachside Bekal, the hill stations of Kodagu, and the ancient temples of Maheshwar. A recent trip for a group of friends focused on spotting the elusive Bengal tiger in the wilds of Rajasthan. *From \$1,000 per person per day; 224-765-4333; ccambata@greavestvl.com; greavesindia.com.*

**Marion Miller**

A combination of must-see sites and lesser-known gems characterize Miller's trips. Recent itineraries have featured special access to a polo match in which the maharajah of Jaipur was playing, and a private walk through the Taj Mahal with the former director of the Archaeological Survey of India, the agency that managed the massive restoration of the iconic site. *From \$1,250 per person per day; 212-545-7111; mmiller@micato.com; micato.com.*

**Shalmali Rao Paterson**

She's able to open normally closed doors in enchanting cities like Jaipur and Jodhpur, connecting visitors with artisans, jewelers, and textile dealers. But her favorite trips lately have taken travelers into southern India for market tours, hiking, and wildlife spotting. *From \$460 per day; 44-20-8741-7390; shalmali.rao.paterson@wildfrontiers.co.uk; wildfrontierstravel.com.*

**Rose Thomas**

Thomas has noticed an uptick in wellness trips. She recently planned a client's journey to Prakriti Shakti in the Western Ghats, a health clinic that specializes in intensive ayurvedic treatments; she scored another a visit to the new Taj Rishikesh Resort & Spa, Uttarakhand, a

destination popular with yoga enthusiasts. *From \$300 per person per day; 800-318-7801; rthomas@greavestvl.com; greavesindia.com.*

**INDONESIA****Jarrod Hobson**

After more than two decades of specializing in Indonesia, Hobson has the connections to line up rare and difficult-to-access adventures. For one trip, he tackled the complex arrangements needed for a traveler to meet with representatives of the Korowai people, an Indigenous group in remote West Papua. He's also taken clients to off-the-radar villages in Bali and lesser-visited islands like Flores and Sumba. *No minimum; 720-881-5575; jarrod@atj.com; atj.com.*

**JAPAN****Scott Gilman**

Art and artisanal craft is a special focus for Gilman. For one recent trip, he organized a visit to the coastal city of Hagi, famous for Hagi-yaki pottery, which has a textured, milky-white glaze. The clients met with master potters and learned how they create their pieces using a traditional kiln. *From \$1,000 per person per day; 202-812-1230; scott@asiaquestjourneys.com; japanquestjourneys.com.*

**Amy Tadehara**

Tadehara considers Japan a lifelong passion—she lived there for four years and speaks the language fluently. Highlights of the hundreds of itineraries she's created for clients include private lessons to learn kaiseki-style cooking and tours of workshops which create *washi*, or traditionally crafted paper. *No minimum; 303-242-5506; amy@insidejapantours.com; insidejapantours.com.*

**MYANMAR****Rebecca Mazzaro**

To help her clients better understand this complex destination, Mazzaro may



*Vishvanatha Temple, in India's Madhya Pradesh state.*

have them take a weaving class near Inle Lake (the region is known for its handmade textiles) or visit Shwedagon Pagoda in Yangon to see sacred Buddhist ceremonies. *From \$350 per person per day; 720-881-5568; rebecca@atj.com; atj.com.*

**SOUTHEAST ASIA****April Cole and Andrea Ross**

Between them, Ross and Cole have 28 years of experience in planning trips to Southeast Asia. They're particularly adept at finding the best new hotels and resorts in the region, such as Shinta Mani Wild and Six Senses Krabey Island, both in Cambodia. They also zero in on travelers' specific passions, from seeing wildlife on Borneo to food tours in Hanoi or Saigon. *From \$200 per person per day; 877-454-3672; andrea.ross@wildfrontierstravel.com; wildfrontierstravel.com.*

**Jack Tydeman**

Tydeman loves sending clients to the remote Bawah Reserve, in Indonesia, and the jungle-shrouded beaches and blissful resorts on the Cambodian coast. He is also forecasting renewed interest in Myanmar among Americans; he's a fan of the country's under-the-radar Wa Ale island. *From \$300 per person per day; 617-223-4912; jack.tydeman@audleytravel.com; audleytravel.com.*



# Africa, the Middle East, and Safaris

## AFRICA

### Cherri Briggs

The Colorado-based Briggs spends half the year in Africa so that she can stay up-to-the-minute on the latest lodge openings and industry happenings. She has contacts across the continent that can help organize a classic safari, a cultural exploration of Masai traditions, or a deep dive into gorilla conservation efforts. Her firm has also pulled off adventure trips that include less-trafficked routes to Mount Kilimanjaro and scuba diving in Mauritius. *From \$1,000 per person per day; 970-871-9820; cherri@exploreafrika.net; exploreinc.com.*

## AFRICA AND THE MIDDLE EAST

### Henrietta Loyd

Loyd can arrange traditional safaris as well as expeditions into lesser-visited corners of Africa, including the Siwa Oasis in Egypt, the Simien Mountains of Ethiopia, and the jungles of Madagascar. *From \$500 per person per day; 800-409-4233; henrietta@cazloyd.com; cazloyd.com.*

## CENTRAL AND EAST AFRICAN SAFARIS

### Will Bolsover

Bolsover has a strong focus on Francophone Africa, including places U.S. travelers rarely venture, like the Central African Republic, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, and Madagascar. While wildlife viewing is a key component of many trips he plans, so too is philanthropy, which is often critical to conservation. *From \$750 per person per day; 44-1273-691-642; will@naturalworldsafaris.com; naturalworldsafaris.com.*

## CENTRAL, EAST, AND SOUTHERN AFRICAN SAFARIS

### Michael Lorentz

For trips to the continent's unsung regions, Lorentz is the one to call: he takes guests to places like Chad, Ethiopia's Omo River valley, and the

Republic of the Congo, often leading a team of guides himself. *From \$1,000 per person per day; 27-21-447-0053; ml@passagetoafrica.com; passagetoafrica.com.*

### Mark Nolting

Nolting specializes in unforgettable wildlife experiences, whether they involve helping to dart rhinos with researchers in South Africa's Kwanwe Private Game Reserve or tracking elephants in Zimbabwe's Mana Pools National Park. *From \$800 per person per day; 800-822-9453; safari@africanadventure.com; africanadventure.com.*

## EAST AND SOUTHERN AFRICA

### Deborah Calmeyer

Zimbabwe-born Calmeyer now splits her time between the U.S. and South Africa, so she can stay on top of the latest developments in the region. She can arrange high-end safaris but also excels at linking visitors with the continent's booming food, fashion, and arts scenes. *From \$1,500 per person per day; 855-666-7627; deb@roarafrica.com; roarafrica.com.*

### Tamsyn Fricker

A Capetonian who knows the coolest things to do in South Africa's hottest city, Fricker also plans multicountry trips that lets travelers hopscotch through the best of Africa's safari camps, including Singita Grumeti Reserves, in Tanzania, and One&Only Nyungwe House, in Rwanda. *From \$1,000 per person per day; 201-848-4113; tamsyn@travelartistryafrica.com; travelartistryafrica.com.*

## EAST AND SOUTHERN AFRICA SAFARIS

### Craig Beal

Whether they're after a traditional Big Five safari in Botswana or a trek to see gorillas in Uganda, clients count on Beal for his connections at the top lodges—and his ability to pair them with the best guides. *From \$1,200 per person per*

*day; 952-475-9975; craig@travelbeyond.com; travelbeyond.com.*

### Elizabeth Gordon

Conservation and meaningful cultural experiences are twin priorities for Gordon, whether she's arranging a visit to Kenya's Amboseli Trust for Elephants or a day with the Samburu people focused on learning about their traditions. *From \$800 per person per day; 212-226-7331; elizabeth@ejafrika.com; extraordinaryjourneys.com.*

### Julian Harrison

A native of South Africa, Harrison excels at multi-stop safaris across the continent that go heavy on adventure: walking through the bush in Zambia and Zimbabwe, paddling through (or taking a doors-off helicopter flight over) the Okavango Delta, or assisting anti-poaching teams in their efforts. *From \$500 per person per day; 800-545-1910; julianh@premiertours.com; premiertours.com.*

### Chris Liebenberg

Raised in Namibia, Liebenberg has decades of experience planning trips through the country's enchanting landscapes. Elsewhere, he's a pro at family-friendly safaris, including walking safaris, that emphasize conservation and wildlife education. *From \$400 per person per day; 858-598-5559; chris@piperandheath.com; piperandheath.com.*

### Leora Rothschild

Rothschild blends wildlife watching in the bush with cultural experiences in far-flung places, including the shores of Kenya's Lake Turkana and the backcountry of Ethiopia. *No minimum; 800-405-9463; leora@rothschildsafaris.com; rothschildsafaris.com.*

### Nina Wennersten

Wennersten's experience with Africa runs deep, and she's also up on the latest trends, like bushwalks, and the luxe "starbeds" that let travelers sleep under inky skies after



Chad's Zakouma National Park.

days spent spotting lions, elephants, and other big game. *From \$500 per person per day; 201-930-9124; info@hippocreeksafaris.com; hippocreeksafaris.com.*

### Liz Wheeler

Wheeler, who lived in Kenya for 20 years, has an encyclopedic knowledge of game preserves, safari camps, and less-visited countries like the Democratic Republic of the Congo and Zambia. *From \$1,250 per person per day; 212-545-7111; lwheeler@micato.com; micato.com.*

## EGYPT

### Malaka Hilton

An expert at unlocking seemingly closed doors, Hilton has arranged behind-the-scenes tours of Cairo's Grand Egyptian Museum and after-hours dinners on the Giza Plateau. She also knows the ins and outs of Nile cruises—including which ships are best. *From \$500 per person per day; 941-951-1801; mandersen@admiraltravel.com; admiraltravel.com.*

## FAMILY SAFARIS

### Sandy Cunningham

Cunningham has pulled off multicountry jaunts with next-to-no notice and can tackle just about any request families throw her way. Lately, she's been planning





## EXPERTS

interactions with local experts, including reporters, scholars, chefs, and craftspeople. They're also clued in to the growing adventure-travel scene in the region. *From \$300 per person per day; 877-778-8644; joe@touringisrael.com; touringisrael.com.*

### MOROCCO

#### Michael Diamond

After nearly 20 years of booking travel to Morocco, Diamond knows all of the top guides, the most beguiling hotels and *riads*, and the shops with the most pilgrimage-worthy souvenirs. He also has ties to artists and artisans who welcome travelers into their studios. *From \$900 per person per day; 646-434-1394; michael@cobblestoneprivatetravel.com; cobblestoneprivatetravel.com.*

### NORTH AFRICA

#### Samantha Gee

Gee's deep expertise in this region makes her the ideal person to help plan multicountry itineraries, like one that combines visits to Egypt's archaeological sites and new cultural institutions like Morocco's Museum of African Contemporary Art Al Maaden. *From \$500 per person per day; 44-1242-787-825; sgee@redsavannah.com; redsavannah.com.*

### OMAN, QATAR, AND U.A.E.

#### Amalia Lazarov

This Arabic speaker is an expert at tailoring trips to specific interests, such as architecture, horseback riding, and Islamic culture. Her itineraries combine stays at some of the region's best hotels, like the Ritz-Carlton Abu Dhabi Grand Canal and Anantara Al Jabal Al Akhdar Resort, with top-flight guides at attractions like Doha's new National Museum of Qatar. *From \$350 per person per day; 212-399-6207; amalia@247travel365.com; travelcioustravel.com.*

an increasing number of gorilla-trekking trips to Rwanda. *From \$1,000 per person per day; 505-795-7710; sandy@outsidego.com; outsidego.com.*

### Teresa Sullivan

Sullivan connects clients with locals who can both entertain and educate, such as the Cape Town street artist she introduced to the teens in one family. She also has access to villas across Africa that are perfect for groups. *From \$750 per person per day; 503-282-9009; lauren@mangosafari.com; mangoafricansafaris.com.*

### ISRAEL

#### Tova Wald

Wald goes deep for travelers with specific interests. She's organized an itinerary focused on the rich street-food traditions of Israel's many religious and ethnic groups and also opened doors at some of the country's hottest tech start-ups. *From \$1,100 per person per day; 972-4-629-1878; tova@tovawald.com; tovawald.com.*

### ISRAEL, JORDAN, AND THE PALESTINIAN TERRITORIES

#### Joseph Yudin

#### and Jonathan Rose

Yudin and his right-hand man Rose enrich itineraries with

## Cruises

### SMALL SHIPS

#### Mary Curry

Curry secures once-in-a-lifetime experiences for her clients, such as hot-air balloon rides in Antarctica or walks with the best private naturalists during a cruise to the Galápagos. She's equally adept at creating custom itineraries for large groups as she is working with solo travelers. *From \$200 per person per day; 406-540-1901; mary.c@adventure-life.com; adventure-life.com.*

#### Ashton Palmer

Before becoming a cruise specialist, Palmer spent years as an expedition leader, naturalist, Zodiac driver, and photographer in destinations ranging from Antarctica to the Amazon to the South Pacific. That experience means he knows what goes into making a life-changing adventure, whether it's a helicopter ride to the top of a glacier in Alaska or a private guided tour of historic churches on Chiloé Island in Chile. *From \$475 per person per day; 206-204-1872; ashton@expeditiontrips.com; expeditiontrips.com.*

### MEDIUM AND SMALL SHIPS

#### Mary Ann Ramsey

Planning customized shore excursions is one of Ramsey's many strengths. For a client interested in seeing the archaeological sites of Petra, Jordan, she arranged a private car and driver from the port of Aqaba with an expert guide who has led former U.S. presidents on similar outings. *From \$1,000 per person per day; 239-513-0333; maryann@bettymacleantravel.com; bettymacleantravel.com.*

### LARGE, MEDIUM, AND SMALL SHIPS

#### Marcella Rappoport

Customized onboard experiences are a specialty for Rappoport, who recently arranged cocktails for clients with the captain of the *Crystal Serenity* in his private quarters—the perfect

vantage point from which to watch the eruption of Mount Stromboli, in Italy's Aeolian Islands. *From \$1,000 per person per day; 212-329-7260; mrappoport@ovationtravel.com; ovationtravel.com.*

#### Ruth Turpin

Pre- and post-cruise excursions are meticulously planned by Turpin. One recent client trip included a three-day tour of Rome with a private entrance to the Sistine Chapel and the Catacombs, plus a similar, exclusive viewing of *David* in Florence. *From \$1,000 per person per day; 817-732-6991; ruth@cruisesetctravel.com; cruisesetctravel.com.*

#### Valerie Wilson

Wilson knows the top ships worldwide, such as those operated by Seabourn, and is excited about the forthcoming Ritz-Carlton yachts. Lately, Wilson has been recommending the newly renovated *Sanctuary Sun Boat III*, after experiencing the vessel herself on a cruise on the Nile last year. *From \$250 per person per day; 212-592-1202; valeriew@vwti.com; valeriewilsontravel.com.*

Ancient Egyptian ruins at Medinet Habu, near Luxor.





*West Papua,  
Indonesia.*



## AUSTRALIA

### Drew Kluska

From his home base in Adelaide, Kluska orchestrates off-the-beaten-path adventures that feature outback ranches and lodges, wildlife encounters, and natural wonders like the Great Barrier Reef. On one trip around the entirety of Australia, a multigenerational family viewed Indigenous rock art with Aboriginal elders as their guides. *From \$1,000 per person per day; 61-8-8354-4405; drew@thetailor.com; thetailor.com.*

## AUSTRALIA AND NEW ZEALAND

### Cassandra Bookholder

A native Aussie, Bookholder has deep connections within the country that enable her to deliver unexpected twists on iconic Down Under destinations—such as river snorkeling in the Daintree Rainforest. She keeps tabs on the latest hotel openings as well as the villa market. One eye-catcher: a family-friendly stay within walking distance of Sydney's Taronga Zoo. *From \$500 per day; 602-889-5902; cassandrab@camelbacktravel.com; camelbacktravel.com.*

### Suzy Mercien-Ferol

Brisbane-based Mercien-Ferol seamlessly pulls off such over-the-top trips as a private-jet culinary tour of South Australia. Her relationships bring privileged access to experiences like tastings with top-tier winemakers and a picnic on a pontoon over the Great Barrier Reef. *From \$1,235 per day; 800-536-5328; luxurytravel@touringtreasures.com; touringtreasures.com.*

### Donna Thomas

Thomas knows how to surpass clients' expectations no matter how niche their interests—guiding lighthouse enthusiasts to a number of closed-to-tourists beacons in New Zealand, for instance. She's also clued in to crowd-pleasers like the new Pure Pod accommodations, a

collection of remote glass cottages on the South Island with unforgettable views. *From \$200 per day; 215-741-5155; donna@newzealandtravel.org; newzealandtravel.org.*

## FRENCH POLYNESIA

### Robin Turner

Turner caters to travelers seeking the picture-perfect Polynesian vacation, whether it's a group getaway or a romantic honeymoon. Turner's extensive knowledge of air carriers and local operators enables her to fluidly coordinate itineraries that string together multiple destinations in the region, including Tahiti, and beyond, like the ever-popular Maldives. *From \$1,200 per day; 877-407-4566; robin.l.turner@aexp.com; americanexpress.com/travel.*

### Christina Turrini

Turrini has made a point of helping to preserve the natural beauty of this region. Each Tahiti-bound traveler she works with, for example, "adopts" coral through the conservation group Coral Guardians—one of her

favorite discoveries of the past year—to help rebuild damaged reefs and maintain local biodiversity. *From \$250 per day; 415-532-8664; christina.turrini@frosch.com; frosch.com.*

## NEW ZEALAND

### Jean-Michel Jefferson

Jefferson shines when it comes to adventurous itineraries. Among the recent trips he's coordinated: a spearfishing excursion with one of the country's top experts and a multiday helicopter safari around the South Island and its Fiordland region. *From \$1,000 per day; 64-3-447-3558; jean-michel@ahipara.com; ahipara.com.*

### Alexandra Stewart

Stewart lives on the North Island and strives to illuminate her country's culture with every itinerary she crafts. For a U.S.-based doctor who wanted to learn about Maori traditions, she arranged an afternoon with a local elder, who taught the visitor about plant-based remedies devised by Indigenous people. *From*

*\$1,000 per day; 64-2998-33806; alexandra@antipodeanluxurytravel.com; antipodeanluxurytravel.com.*

## NEW ZEALAND AND FIJI

### Sarah Farag

Immersive local experiences are among the top requests from Farag's clients, and the Aucklander delivers with activities like a helicopter ride to the rarely visited Lyell Glacier and a hands-on private foraging cruise, searching Marlborough Sound for mussels and clams. *From \$490 per person per day; 64-21-357-427; sarah@southern-crossings.com; southern-crossings.com.*

## SOUTH PACIFIC

### Susanne Hamer

Hamer weaves together itineraries that showcase the culture and beauty of the South Pacific. She's always plugged into the latest openings and can plan luxurious trips to Bora-Bora, the Cook Islands, and Fiji. *From \$800 per person per day; 310-689-5411; susanne.h@travelstore.com; travelstore.com.*

*The Champagne Pool at Waiotapu, on New Zealand's North Island.*





## ADVENTURE TRAVEL

### Kassandra Magruder

While Magruder plans trips worldwide, her expertise lies in Africa, Latin America, and the polar regions. She recently organized a 43-day trip for a solo traveler that took in rain forests, cities, and sand dunes, with expert guides at stops along the way. *From \$200 per person per day; 406-540-1903; kassandra.m@adventure-life.com; adventure-life.com.*

## AIR TRAVEL

### Paul Tumpowsky

Tumpowsky arranges discounted airfares with such major carriers as American Airlines, Delta Air Lines, and Emirates, saving his clients thousands of dollars while securing such perks as refundability. *From \$500 per person per day; 917-664-6200; p@skylark.com; skylark.com.*

## BUSINESS TRAVEL

### Jennifer Wilson-Buttigieg

Whether she's planning a long weekend at Gleneagles, in Scotland, for top travel industry executives or arranging a digital detox for a busy client at Four Seasons Resort Seychelles at Desroches Island, Wilson-Buttigieg goes above and beyond with her personalized itineraries. *From \$1,000 per person per day; 212-592-1210; jenniferwb@vwvti.com; valerie wilsontravel.com.*

## DESTINATION CELEBRATIONS

### Jody Bear

Bear has organized multigenerational vacations, around-the-world private-jet tours, family reunions, team-building trips with executives, and educational expeditions for families. She also serves as a 24/7 concierge who can line up hard-to-get tickets and recommend the most up-to-the-minute restaurants. *No minimum; 212-340-0301; jodyb@beartvl.com; bearandbear.travel.*

## FAMILY TRAVEL

### Jessica Griscavage

Griscavage frequently works with the same families for years, helping them plan trips for every stage of life: traveling with a newborn; a cruise with youngsters; college visits turned vacations; grandparents traveling with grandchildren. *No minimum; 703-762-5056; jessica@mccabeworld.com; mccabeworld.com.*

## FLY-FISHING

### Betsy Donley

Arizona-based Donley developed a taste for adventure while growing up in Brazil and Costa Rica. She's passionate about organizing fly-fishing trips, which she frequently leads; last year she took a group to Cuba for a private-yacht expedition in search of bonefish and tarpon. *From*

*\$500 per person per day; 602-889-5909; betsyd@camelbacktravel.com; camelbacktravel.com.*

## HONEYMOONS AND WEDDINGS

### Josh Alexander

Alexander recently planned a trip for a couple that included accommodations at the private Bordeaux home of a luxury hotelier, wine tastings, and a surprise engagement punctuated with fireworks. *No minimum; 212-651-2110; josh.alexander@protravelinc.com; protravelinc.com.*

### Harlan deBell and Kara Bebell

These siblings fashion trips that spell romance with a capital R. Recently deBell and Bebell organized a marriage proposal at the Giza Plateau in Egypt; a small wedding lunch on the remote island of Rhenia, off Mykonos, Greece; and a dinner with locals for a honeymooning couple in Chiang Mai, Thailand. *From \$500 per person per day; 212-340-4315; thetravelsiblings@tzell.com; thetravelsiblings.com.*

### Kristen Korey Pike

Korey Pike puts an emphasis on dream nuptials. Earlier this year, she coordinated a wedding with 300 guests that included a buyout of Eden Rock—St. Barths, followed by a honeymoon for the newlyweds in Africa and the Maldives. *No minimum; 216-513-1811; kristen@kktww.com; kktww.com.*

## LGBTQ TRAVEL

### John Clifford

Clifford has developed an extensive network to build can't-believe-it moments, such as a journey to Brazil that included dinner and excursions with a well-known fashion designer. *From \$500 per person per day; 619-299-2359; john@internationaltravelmanagement.com; internationaltravelmanagement.com.*

### David Rubin

Rubin knows the gay-friendly hotels, cruise lines, guides,

and drivers. Recently, he arranged a gorilla-trekking expedition for a client, with the help of a handpicked and welcoming team on the ground. *From \$500 per person per day; 949-903-1110; david@davidtravel.com; davidtravel.com.*

## OVER-THE-TOP TRIPS

### Chad Clark

If a client can dream it, Clark can devise it, whether it's a special wedding anniversary at the Ritz Paris—complete with a suite full of the couple's favorite flowers—or a tour of New Zealand's best golf courses and luxury lodges by private plane. *From \$2,500 per person; 602-228-2928; cclark@chadclarktravel.com; chadclarktravel.com.*

## POLAR TRAVEL

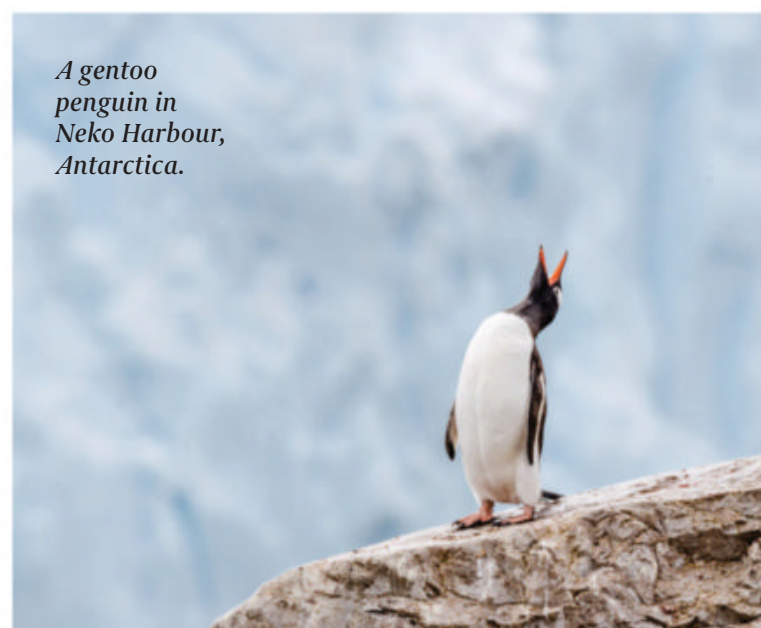
### Henry Cookson

Cookson sometimes devotes an entire year to planning a client's trip, often collaborating with scientists and conservationists. An itinerary might include searching for polar bears in Svalbard, Norway, or yachting around the Antarctic Peninsula. He also has extensive experience with submersibles—and one of his clients recently discovered a Roman shipwreck while aboard one. *From \$4,000 per person per day; 44-799-03-77-38; hc@cooksonadventures.com; cooksonadventures.com.*

## WINE AND GASTRONOMY TRAVEL

### Darren Humphreys

A native of South Africa, Humphreys has spent a decade arranging trips with a wine and food focus, highlighting such popular destinations as the Cape Winelands and New Zealand's Otago region. He's also attuned to emerging wine scenes in Armenia, Croatia, and Morocco. *No minimum; 203-919-9161; darren@travel sommelier.com; travel sommelier.com.*



*A gentoo penguin in Neko Harbour, Antarctica.*



This group, which shares its industry knowledge with the editors of T+L, oversees tens of thousands of individual trips annually. While not all of these experts personally look after clients, many do—and the rest have teams who excel at orchestrating memorable adventures.



*A sundeck at Soneva Jani, an overwater resort in the Maldives.*

## Marcus Barlow

A leader at American Express Travel and Lifestyle Services, Barlow and his team work with premium card members to plan trips around the world. 602-537-4245; [marcus.c.barlow@aexp.com](mailto:marcus.c.barlow@aexp.com).

## Rob Clabbers

Clabbers specializes in cruise adventures as well as safaris and other expedition-style trips. 312-266-7447; [rob@qcruisetravel.com](mailto:rob@qcruisetravel.com).

## Shelby Donley

Donley's focus is leisure trips—including high-end, ultra-private vacations—in places like the Galápagos and Thailand. 602-266-4000; [shelbyd@camelbacktravel.com](mailto:shelbyd@camelbacktravel.com).

## Jack Ezon

The founder of a boutique travel firm, Ezon crafts destination celebrations like weddings, anniversaries, and blowout birthdays in the Caribbean, Mexico, and beyond. 212-651-3750; [jezon@embarkbeyond.com](mailto:jezon@embarkbeyond.com).

## Kareem George

With his background as an orchestra administrator, George is a pro at devising trips centered on arts and culture, particularly in Germany. 888-350-3690; [kgeorge@culturetraveler.com](mailto:kgeorge@culturetraveler.com).

## Barkley Hickox

Hickox knows where to stay in

just about any country. She pairs those perfect hotels with customized itineraries. 646-455-3101; [barkley.hickox@localforeigner.com](mailto:barkley.hickox@localforeigner.com).

## Shawna Huffman Owen

A former management consultant, Huffman Owen pulls off epic trips for families and multigenerational groups worldwide. 312-257-2988; [shawna@huffmantravel.com](mailto:shawna@huffmantravel.com).

## Dan Ilves

Ilves and his team navigate all manner of travel challenges, and he has a particular expertise in planning cruise vacations. 310-752-9104; [dan.i@travelstore.com](mailto:dan.i@travelstore.com).

## Marc Kazlauskas

As the head of leisure travel for Frosch, Kazlauskas and his team have a globe-spanning reach when it comes to vacation planning. 212-404-6300; [marc.kazlauskas@frosch.com](mailto:marc.kazlauskas@frosch.com).

## Mark Lakin

Lakin's newly launched travel firm has a focus on "bespoke immersions" for travelers in search of adventure, particularly in Japan. 646-580-3026; [ml@thelegacyuntold.com](mailto:ml@thelegacyuntold.com).

## David Lowy

This private-jet specialist and travel planner is also a golf obsessive who can secure coveted tee times at iconic courses, like the Royal Dornoch. 604-733-1010; [dlowy@renshawtravel.com](mailto:dlowy@renshawtravel.com).

## Steve Orens

Orens has close ties with many of the top hotel brands in the world, including Four Seasons, Rosewood, and Taj. 818-990-4053; [steve@plazatravel.com](mailto:steve@plazatravel.com).

## Julia B. Pirrung

A family-travel pro, she and her team personalize every

trip, whether it's an African safari or island-hopping in the Adriatic. 312-574-1181; [julia@jetsetworldtravel.com](mailto:julia@jetsetworldtravel.com).

## Olga Placeres

As the head of a Florida-based agency, Placeres oversees an expert team of luxury travel and cruise experts. 239-261-1177; [olga@preferrednaples.com](mailto:olga@preferrednaples.com).

## Becky Powell

Powell knows luxury travel, having worked at some of the foremost agencies in the world, as well as the high-end travel collective Virtuoso. 212-651-2106; [becky.powell@protravelinc.com](mailto:becky.powell@protravelinc.com).

## Sandy Schadler

Schadler and her team help plan corporate travel for major businesses as well as leisure trips for people who want to vacation like it's their job. 615-367-4900; [sandy.schadler@travelink.com](mailto:sandy.schadler@travelink.com).

## Linda Scroggins

From her HQ at AT&T Stadium in Dallas, Scroggins pulls off group travel without a hitch, whether the adventure is a faith-based mission trip, a multifamily cruise vacation, or a friend's getaway to see a big game. 844-222-3500; [linda@lindascroggins.com](mailto:linda@lindascroggins.com).

## Anne Scully

Scully is the president of McCabe World Travel. In 2014, she was named the godmother of the *Viking Ingvi*, which typically sails on the Danube. 703-945-7768; [anne@mccabeworld.com](mailto:anne@mccabeworld.com).

## Judy Stein

As an advisor with Ovation Travel, Stein offers her clients the reach of a large agency and the attention of a high-touch trip planner. 212-329-7396; [jstein@ovationtravel.com](mailto:jstein@ovationtravel.com).

## Jim Strong

Strong and his staff are experts in all things luxury, and they're particularly plugged in when it comes to Europe. 214-361-0027; [jim@strongtravel.com](mailto:jim@strongtravel.com).

## Carmen Teresa Targa

Based in Puerto Rico, Targa specializes in Caribbean travel, though her team has global expertise in planning vacations, including cruise itineraries. 787-754-7000; [carmenttarga@condadotravel.com](mailto:carmenttarga@condadotravel.com).

## Kendra Thornton

Thornton heads a family-run agency that's up on the latest trends. In recent years she has planned numerous romantic getaways, over-the-top honeymoons, and private-jet escapes. 815-217-0608; [kthornton@royaltravel.com](mailto:kthornton@royaltravel.com).

## Tesa Totengco

A former fashion industry executive, Totengco prides herself on sussing out distinct small hotels and restaurants that capture the atmosphere of a destination. 917-664-2293; [tesa@travelswithtesa.com](mailto:tesa@travelswithtesa.com).

## David Van Ness

Van Ness also has a fashion background; today he's an expert in luxury travel at an agency that's equally skilled at finding the perfect cruise or managing corporate travel. 310-903-5127; [davidvn@all-travel.com](mailto:davidvn@all-travel.com).

## Keith Waldon

A longtime Virtuoso executive, Waldon has since founded his own agency, which specializes in luxury trips that deliver premium service and unforgettable moments. 512-750-1012; [kwaldon@departurelounge.com](mailto:kwaldon@departurelounge.com).

## Kemi Wells

This U.K. native now lives in Vancouver, where she works with an agency that plans both leisure and business travel. 604-537-7941; [kemi@kemiwells.com](mailto:kemi@kemiwells.com).

## Kimberly Wilson Wetty

The copresident of one of the country's biggest travel firms, Wilson Wetty is also on advisory boards of brands like Celebrity Cruises and Rosewood. 212-532-3400; [kimberlywww@vwti.com](mailto:kimberlywww@vwti.com).





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HOUR





The Austrian capital hasn't been this exciting since the fin de siècle. Flamboyant restaurants and fashion-forward hotels are adding spice to the city's pristine parks, storied museums, and cherished holiday markets.

**By John Wray**

**Photographs by Daniel Gebhart de Koekkoek**

*From top: The amusement park at the Prater, a public garden in Vienna's second district; a staircase at the Altstadt Vienna hotel. Opposite, from top: The Zehnzehn, a cocktail of gin, vermouth, champagne, and gentian at the Birdyard; Café in der Burggasse 24.*



VIENNA'S 20TH DISTRICT, a traditionally working-class neighborhood across the Danube from the city's famous Rococo churches and Jugendstil villas, was well down the list of places I expected to have one of the most spectacular meals of my life. My friend Ellie Tzortzi and I were already five courses into a 15-plate extravaganza of sublimity, subversion, and occasional eruptions of out-and-out weirdness when a dish arrived that both my palate and my cerebellum are still buzzing from: a miniature *döner* kebab, made not with lamb but shoulder of venison,



▲  
*Clockwise from above:  
The Donaukanal,  
a tributary of the  
Danube; the Josef Frank  
Suite at the Altstadt  
Vienna hotel; chef Daan  
de Val in the kitchen of  
Deval, an Indonesian-  
fusion restaurant.*





on a flatbread incorporating dark poppyseed, Austria's most cherished baking ingredient. Devotee of Sacher torte and knödel that I am, the combination struck me as delicious and incongruous in roughly equal measure. As I'd soon come to learn, however, a more perfect culinary totem for today's Vienna couldn't be devised.

Ellie had convinced me that we should spend my first evening in the Austrian capital at Mraz & Sohn, currently the hottest ticket in Vienna, but I'd accepted her suggestion with more than a slight twinge of doubt. As an Austrian American living in the United States, it hasn't escaped me that Vienna has gone through some promising changes in recent years. Nevertheless, the idea that the grungy 20th district, whose claim to culinary fame was always its sausage stands, might really be the place to spend half my travel budget on a single dinner took some time to get my head around.

But Ellie—who was already far more sophisticated than I was when we dated, back in our misspent youth—has a way of putting me in my place with a glance over the top of her stylishly clunky glasses, and I've never been

more grateful for her powers of intimidation than I was on that night.

Austria's cuisine has been described as excessively tradition-bound. But well before the final course at Mraz & Sohn—after charred-leek pappardelle in a sauce of aged Emmenthaler, a porcini-foam consommé, shrimp sashimi with *umeboshi* mayo, and something called “Fig-alize It,” which I can't even begin to describe—I was starting to question whether what I thought I knew about the Viennese restaurant scene should be lobbed into the beautiful blue (actually brownish-green) Danube.

Manuel Mraz, one of the owners of the Michelin two-starred restaurant, wheeled a bookshelf-size cheese cart through the spare white dining room to our table. “People sometimes ask us whether this neighborhood is even still in Vienna,” he told me. “Even twenty years ago, when my brother and I grew up here, this area was seen as great for affordable dining, but too far out of the way for most people. What's different now is that they're more willing to go for an adventure beyond the inner districts.”

That night I stayed in the quirkily luxurious Altstadt Vienna hotel, which, like Mraz & Sohn, is located outside the Ringstrasse, the boulevard that circles the central historic district where visitors typically congregate. Each of its 62 rooms has a different design scheme, including one created by Viennese fashion innovator Lena Hoschek. My airy suite was essentially a 1½-room homage to the work of Josef Frank, an icon of mid-century Austrian design who spent much of his working life in Sweden and became a major player in what later came to be known as Scandinavian Modern design.

Lying on the somewhat austere but undeniably comfortable Josef Frank bed, I found myself thinking back to my days at the University of Vienna, when I would often have the feeling I was living in an enormous open-air museum: a city that was



*Clockwise from below:  
The Hotel Bristol, a Vienna  
mainstay since 1892; fried  
dough with sauerkraut  
at a Christmas market;  
Café Espresso, in Vienna's  
seventh district.*



generously supplied with scenic views and immaculate temples to classical European culture, but felt lifeless once the sun went down.

Vienna in the 1990s seemed bored with itself, cynically content to profit from the art and ideas of a more vibrant era, one that fascism had snuffed out six decades before. You even felt it in the all-purpose ennui at student parties: everyone seemed to be standing around in a state of existential paralysis, chain-smoking and rolling their eyes. In those days, if you were looking for excitement, your best bet was to spend the weekend in Prague, or even—if you could afford it—to take the night train to Berlin.

These days, the kids from Berlin are just as often taking the night train to Vienna.

“THIS CITY LIVES much more of its life out in public now,” Peter Wünschmann, one of the designers of Vienna’s exquisitely functional subway system (who also happens to be my uncle), told me as we strolled through the Prater, the imperial Hapsburg hunting grounds in the leafy second district. “There’s street life here, the kind you might expect to find in Naples or Dubrovnik.”

We had spent the morning at a festival for cutting-edge art, and now





were in the mood for something more traditional. So we took a five-minute subway ride to the Rathausplatz, a large public square adjacent to the town hall, where arguably the best-known of Vienna's famous Christmas markets sells handicrafts, confectionery, handmade tree decorations—and, most importantly, hot mulled punch—from late fall through the end of the holiday season. Some of my most cherished childhood memories are of strolling from booth to booth in these almost impossibly picturesque markets. To my delight, very little has changed: the toasted almonds are still sugar-crusted, the punch is still steamy, and the booths still look like tiny Alpine cabins constructed by gnomes.

As we absorbed the festive spirit, my uncle argued that I shouldn't be surprised at what he's taken to calling the "Viennaisance," given the city's long and cyclical history of immigration from Eastern Europe and the Balkans. Vienna recently surpassed Frankfurt as the second-largest urban center in the German-speaking world, and most of that demographic explosion has been driven

by immigrants from the so-called former Soviet republics.

What's more, in spite of what the far right may claim, the city's mushrooming diversity represents a return to—not a departure from—Vienna's glory days. "The languages you hear on the street today are the same ones you'd have heard in the nineteenth century," my uncle told me as we strolled through the Museumsquartier, the vast former stables of the imperial court that have since been repurposed into a daunting assemblage of cultural offerings, from contemporary museums to architecture studios to theaters to a pop-up tiki bar. "What we're witnessing right now is a return









*The bar at the Hotel Bristol has retained its original paneling and furniture. Opposite: A Christmas market next to the Karlskirche.*

**‘The most beautiful change, to me, is not that Vienna is multicultural again,’ my friend Ellie said. ‘It’s that Vienna is proud of it, after eighty-plus-years of stuffiness.’**

of the qualities that made this city one of the centers of the intellectual world a century ago. None of this is unprecedented.” His eyes went to the tiki hut for a moment, where a gaggle of well-heeled Viennese hipsters were lounging on brightly colored plastic divans. “Except, I suppose, the kombucha caipirinhas.”

Vienna has certainly never been the destination of choice for those in pursuit of a world-class cocktail—even on more recent visits, my impression had been that you were pushing your luck ordering anything more intricate than a glass of Grüner Veltliner. On my third night, however, my cousin Sophie, who writes and designs cookbooks and has lived in Vienna all her life, took me to a series of watering holes that would give the most overpriced speakeasy in Manhattan or Los Angeles a run for its artisanal ice cubes. The standout was the Birdyard, a basement cocktail lounge

in the eighth district—a just-outside-of-the-Ring neighborhood that has become increasingly fashionable over the past decade or so.

The bar, which opened last year, is a veritable dreamscape, graced by floor-to-ceiling murals featuring gargantuan breadfruit trees and tropical birds the size of concert grand pianos. On my first visit, I ordered a mixological flight of fancy called, appropriately enough, the Escape: a pinkish-white concoction of coconut milk, Diplomático rum, pineapple, lime, and something called “coconut beer.” It turned out to be





a palate-dazzler. The subterranean nature of the Birdyard's space makes for curious acoustics, and as I was waiting at the bar for my second (or was it third?) Escape, I overheard an exchange between a young British couple at a neighboring booth that captures the essence of my five curious days in Vienna better than I ever could:

"Wasn't Mozart born around here?"

"Mozart who?"

NOT WANTING TO deprive myself of a taste of the city's tradition of genteel luxury, I spent my last night in town at the Hotel Bristol, a grande dame that boasts a list of eminent former guests as glitzy as the Hapsburg crown jewels. Sergei Rachmaninoff, Kim Novak, and Ernest Shackleton have all stayed there—even, to my astonishment, Iggy & the Stooges, though presumably only once.



*Clockwise from top left: Lukas, left, and Manuel Mraz with their father, Markus, at their restaurant Mraz & Sohn; the Birdyard, a flamboyant cocktail bar in the eighth district; meeting in the Museumsquartier.*





The rooms at the Bristol are every bit as cushy as one would expect. Mine had a balcony with a view of the Vienna State Opera and something called a “pillow menu.” (I’m still kicking myself for not trying out the Mühldorfer horsehair body cushion.) Visiting the gloriously retro, wood-paneled hotel bar that evening, I found myself seated next to a middle-aged German man so extravagantly dissolute-looking that he could only have been an aging rock star—which he duly turned out to be. The dreadlocked young man on the barstool beside him, who bore a striking resemblance to Nigerian Afro-fusion sensation Burna Boy, delighted me. At one point in the evening he ordered a pint of beer in the thickest Tyrolian accent I’d heard in years.

“THE MOST BEAUTIFUL CHANGE, to me, is not that Vienna is multicultural again—it’s that Vienna is proud of it, after eighty-plus-years of stuffiness,” Ellie enthused to me that evening over a glass of Weissburgunder at Deval, a restaurant so new that its menus hadn’t even been bound yet. “You can see this in the places people are going to eat. Most of the rising stars of the Viennese gastro scene are either of Austrian-plus-something-else heritage or they’re relatively new to the country. It’s almost impossible for them not to be bringing all sorts of unfamiliar elements here.”

As if on cue, Daan de Val, the Dutch-born co-proprietor of Deval, brought out a dish that put an abrupt end to our pontificating: rendang-style lamb with potatoes and parsnips from (Continued on page 102)

## Vienna, from the Classic to the Contemporary

### Where to Stay

Each of the 62 guest rooms at the **Altstadt Vienna** ([altstadt.at](http://altstadt.at); doubles from \$200) has a unique look. The **Hotel Bristol** ([marriott.com](http://marriott.com); doubles from \$354) has been one of the city’s grande dames since 1892, and the rooms are every bit as comfortable as you would expect. And the 63-room **Sans Souci** ([sanssouci-wien.com](http://sanssouci-wien.com); doubles from \$383) is a bright, airy boutique hotel that complements the grandeur and romance of its location in the Museumsquartier.

### Where to Eat

Venture to the 20th district for the unmissable **Mraz & Sohn** ([mrazundsohn.at](http://mrazundsohn.at); 15-course tasting menu \$172), a family-run establishment with two Michelin stars. **Deval** ([devalrestaurant.at](http://devalrestaurant.at); four-course tasting menu from \$78) is an Indonesian fusion restaurant near the Ringstrasse. For a sampling of Vienna’s vaunted café culture, visit **Café in der Burggasse 24** ([fb.com/cafe.burggasse24](https://fb.com/cafe.burggasse24)) or **Café Espresso** ([espresso-wein.at](http://espresso-wein.at)). And don’t forget to try the Escape, one of the

creative cocktails at the **Birdyard** ([thebirdyard.at](http://thebirdyard.at)).

### What to See

Open from late fall through the end of the holiday season, the Christmas Market at the Rathausplatz is the city’s largest. Expect a dazzling display of colored lights and more than 150 stalls selling ornaments and sugary treats. The Prater, a massive park in the second district, houses an amusement park among its many green spaces and trails.





# IN THE RIGHT HANDS

*Namelok, a Masai tribesman, accompanied photographer Frédéric Lagrange around Kenya's Tsavo National Park. In his 20-year career, Lagrange has worked with hundreds of local guides. Opposite: "My first time in Bhutan was in 2004," Lagrange said. "I still keep in touch with my guide on that trip, Dorji Nyeljorma."*





Unlocking a destination is always best left to the locals—something photographer **FRÉDÉRIC LAGRANGE** learned over decades of far-flung travel assignments. Here, he presents portraits of his most unforgettable guides, and tells **JOHN WOGAN** why he won't set off without one.

**A**SK ANY SEASONED traveler to define the difference between a good trip and a life-changing one, and you'll probably hear the same answer: an extraordinary guide.

Whether you're in pursuit of the Big Five on safari or discovering the secrets of ancient Rome, the right person can totally transform the way you interact with a place.

That's certainly been the case for the French photographer Frédéric Lagrange, who over the past 20 years has visited some of the most inaccessible

destinations on earth. Some trips (the Alaskan wilderness; the jungles of Papua province, on Indonesian New Guinea; the remote grasslands of Tanzania) were on assignment for publications like *Travel + Leisure*. Others were more personal, driven by his fascination with extreme environments—such as the snow forests of northern Mongolia, or Afghanistan's Wakhan Corridor, a mountainous strip between Pakistan and Tajikistan.

The common thread running through all of these expeditions was a trusted local companion, someone who



could help Lagrange navigate a landscape that would have otherwise been impenetrable.

“The single biggest factor in a successful project or assignment to a far-off place is finding the right guide,” he said when we spoke by phone—me in California and Lagrange in Bali, where he’s been living since the pandemic disrupted the world in March. “If I don’t, the entire thing collapses.” As a testament to their importance, Lagrange took a portrait of every guide he’s traveled with—a selection of which is published on these pages.

Take Leighan Falley, a bush pilot in Alaska who flew Lagrange to a remote glacier in Denali National Park. Pro pilots like Falley, who often transport mountain climbers and backcountry skiers to locations accessible only by plane, are essential in such terrain—and not just for their skills in the cockpit. They also shine a light on the substance and character of the state.

“I was born and raised in Alaska and feel a deep connection to its wilderness,” Falley said. “Many people arrive with preconceived ideas. I want to show them that Alaskans can be progressive and have an open worldview.” And, she added: “I want to prove to the world that women can be bush pilots!”

Over the years, Lagrange has developed an almost instinctual ability to sense whether a guide is the right fit. In booking someone in advance of his trip to Afghanistan, the photographer relied on a referral from Jonny Bealby, founder of the London-based adventure-travel company Wild Frontiers. Bealby’s contact eventually introduced him to a group of Wakhi farmers, who knew the Wakhan Corridor intimately.

For three weeks, the men led Lagrange on daily 10-mile hikes. The conditions on that trip were as harsh as it gets, Lagrange recalled. Wakhan has virtually no infrastructure, so visitors must get around on foot (with the help of donkeys to transport camping gear) while battling frequent blizzards at altitudes of 15,000 feet.

Though none of the farmers guiding him spoke English, and he didn’t speak the Afghan language of Wakhi, Lagrange found that a mutual trust was earned after just a few days. “Eventually, no words were necessary. We learned to read each other in different ways,” he said. “It was such a powerful experience, and in the end, it was emotional leaving each other. I think of them often.”

As Lagrange put it, “The true sense of a place would be lost without the right person by your side.”

It’s not about a certain résumé, he added, but about the ability to reveal the essence of a location. On a trip to the pristine, primordial forests of Papua in western New Guinea, Lagrange was documenting the hunters of the region’s isolated Kombai community with his local guide, who goes by the name Bofoko. “I was able to glimpse the tribe and the surrounding nature through his eyes, his years of living in the forest,” Lagrange said. “I could never have had this privilege without him.” +



▲ From top: Udin, an orangutan expert Lagrange met in Indonesian Borneo, standing beside a banyan tree in Kutai National Park. The photographer traveled with Afghan farmer Amir Muhammad for three weeks.





▲ From top: Lagrange met nomadic deer herder Yadam Bayandalai in Mongolia's far north. Alison Mundy and Martin Dodwell led the photographer on a horseback safari through the Serengeti. "I felt safe with them, even when we heard lions roaring in the distance," he said.

▲ From top: In Papua, Indonesia, New Guinean guide Bofoko led Lagrange deep into the highlands to meet the rest of his Kombai tribe. Alaskan-born Leighan Falley piloted the photographer into the most remote parts of the state.









# *An Autumn Sonata*

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COME FALL, WHEN THE SUMMER CROWDS HAVE PACKED UP, THE BERKSHIRES TURN MELLOW AND ATMOSPHERIC—IDEAL FOR A HIKE HIGH ABOVE THE CHANGING LEAVES OR A HARVEST MEAL UNDER A DAPPLED SKY. ON A VISIT DURING THIS VIBRANT SEASON, **PETER TERZIAN** MEETS SOME OF THE YOUTHFUL ENTREPRENEURS MAKING A ONCE-QUIET CORNER OF NEW ENGLAND SING A BRIGHT NEW SONG.

**PHOTOGRAPHS  
BY NICOLE FRANZEN**

◀  
*The Hoosic River  
flows through the  
grounds of  
Tourists, a hotel in  
North Adams,  
Massachusetts.*



**YEARS AGO**, I would take the bus from Boston, where I went to college, to visit my parents back home in upstate New York. I came to know the journey by heart. The coach would lumber along the turnpike to the western end of Massachusetts, then follow a poky local route through the low-lying Berkshire mountains.

The landscape was beautiful—especially in autumn, when the trees were on fire—and the more popular tourist towns looked like they hadn’t changed much since the 1970s, when James Taylor name-checked the Berkshires in “Sweet Baby James.” When my bus stopped in Lenox, home to the outdoor classical music venue Tanglewood, I would watch a khaki-and-loafers crowd mill about streets lined with quaint boutiques. But a forlorn, dusty aura hung over other parts of the region; the larger cities, North Adams and Pittsfield, were former manufacturing hubs that had clearly fallen on hard times.

Many decades later, my husband and I sat on the patio at Tourists, a reimagining of the archetypal American motel built on the site of an old motor lodge halfway between Williamstown and downtown North Adams. We took in the crowd around us: a guy with a New Order

T-shirt, a gay couple with a big white dog, a stylish man and woman in their eighties. The scent of burning wood filled the air. I heard a train pass in the distance. Caleb’s beer came in a can designed with the same font and color palette as the Beach Boys’ *Pet Sounds* album.

Then a server spread an entire garden before us: sweet and spicy hummus with marinated vegetables and a sheet of naan the size of an elephant’s ear; crispy quinoa and *freekeh* tossed in a creamy kefir dressing and topped with avocado and jack cheese; a salad of fire-alarm-red tomatoes. Moments before, I had overheard a man at another table going on about how “fresh” the food was. *Yeah, yeah*, I thought. *Everything’s “fresh” these days*. But this was picked-five-minutes-ago fresh. Watching the sky above the lodge’s peaked roof turn a smoky purple, I mopped up the last of the hummus and felt a tingling sense of delight.

From Route 2, the commercial strip out front, Tourists looks like a series of wood-sided hangars. (I later learned that the Modernist architecture of Sea Ranch, California, was a primary inspiration.) But a more rustic scene unfolds around back, where Caleb and I explored a 30-acre swath of woodland through which the trout-stocked Hoosic River flows. Each guest room has a large window that frames this thickly green landscape and a rear terrace from where the busy main road seems worlds away. A footpath leads across an impressive suspension bridge, then winds around the property, passing industrial relics and, at one point, intersecting with the Appalachian Trail.

The rooms have a camplike sparseness, with white walls and plywood furniture. But the roughing-it atmosphere is offset by a number of thoughtful details: a window seat about the size of a twin bed; a trio of soaps laid out on a board like cheeses. An arrangement of vintage snapshots above our desk nodded to the region’s history as a vacation mecca during the rise of automobile tourism in the early 20th century. Co-owner John Stirratt, the bassist for the band Wilco, programs Tourists Radio, which can be played on each room’s retro-looking receiver. The station is also streamed in the main lodge, where the next morning we listened to Townes Van Zandt and Big Thief while I ate an egg sandwich that brought me to the realization that egg sandwiches are my all-time favorite food.

**THE NEW**, more youthful Berkshires that Tourists has come to represent is the result of what Ben Svenson, another of the hotel’s co-owners, described to me as “re-pioneering.” He defines the term as “people from outside looking at a place with a fresh set of eyes, loving the history of it and wanting to respect it, but also imagining a different future for it.” Tourists, says Svenson, is “a disciple of Mass MoCA,” the contemporary-art museum three miles east in downtown North Adams. (In fact, the hotel guest rooms are the same shade of

▼  
*Blantyre, once a private home modeled after a Scottish castle, is now a resort.*

►  
*The entry of the Inn at Kenmore Hall, a sophisticated bed-and-breakfast.*















◀ Cosmic Latte, an installation of suspended LEDs by Spencer Finch, at Mass MoCA.

NEW YORK

VERMONT

North Adams

Williamstown

• Mount Greylock

Massachusetts

• Lenox

• Monument Mountain

B E R K S H I R E S

New Marlborough

CONNECTICUT

white as the gallery's walls.) The opening of the museum in 1999 in an abandoned electric works arguably jump-started the northern Berkshires revival. Over the ensuing decades, Mass MoCA has developed into its own sprawling universe, as more of the dilapidated buildings have been transformed into exhibition spaces.

"I love the feeling of a bunch of stuff around me," I overheard a teenage girl say as Caleb and I walked through the galleries the next morning. Mass MoCA overwhelms. Everything is oversize, or superabundant, or subsuming. A Jarvis Rockwell installation is made up of towering shelves of dolls and vitrines filled with vintage board games and toy figurines. A shower of LEDs, arranged by Spencer Finch in the form of the Milky Way, descends from the ceiling of a brick-lined hallway. Enter a windowless, capsule-shaped room designed by James Turrell and you're bathed in a sequence of gently shifting colors.

Mass MoCA has strong ties to the music world, in part due to its close relationship with Wilco: the band curates and performs at a biannual festival held at the museum called Solid Sound, inviting along such friends as Courtney Barnett and Cate Le Bon. These alt-rock connections spill over into the galleries. We toured an exhibition of paintings by Chrissie Hynde and an installation by Annie Lennox, who half-buried a number of her possessions—tarot cards, cassettes, a piano, her gold record for "Sweet Dreams Are Made of This"—in an enormous pile of dirt.

Three miles west of Tourists, the Clark Art Institute delivers what feels like the opposite of Mass MoCA's funhouse atmosphere—and yet it's every bit as transcendent. Caleb and I have a long history with the museum. We discovered it when we were in our thirties: a day trip there was a rewarding way to spend an afternoon with my parents when we would drive up from Brooklyn to visit them. My mother and father relished seeing works by the painters they loved: Monet, Morisot, Pissarro, Sargent, Degas. The museum was built in the 1950s, when an heir to the Singer sewing machine fortune, Robert Sterling Clark, and his wife, Francine, wanted to protect their personal collection from the possibility of a nuclear attack on New York City and decided that pastoral Williamstown was a safe enough site.





▲ One of the Clark Art Institute's galleries of European paintings.





▲  
*The Veterans War Memorial  
Tower on top of Mount Greylock.*

A massive expansion, completed in 2014, has turned the Clark from a somewhat sleepy estate into a buzzing tourist draw. Thanks to a subtle overhaul, the original galleries are warmer and friendlier, with a special room devoted to my favorite Clark discovery, the 19th-century landscape painter George Inness. The main building is almost overshadowed by Japanese architect Tadao Ando's new wing, which holds multiple spaces for temporary exhibitions and hugs a vast reflecting pool.

The Clark has 120 acres that fan out from the museum, with meadows scored by walking trails. We were tempted to explore them, but I had arranged another way for us to experience the bucolic side of the Berkshires. Ramblewild, 12 miles to the south, bills itself as a "tree-to-tree adventure park." "I'm not going to tell you anything about it," I told Caleb. "I'll just let it be a surprise." The truth is I wasn't so sure what it was myself.

From the lodge at Ramblewild's entrance, we were driven deep into the forest, then outfitted in helmets and harnesses like Wichita linemen, and led to a hemlock grove, where a vast complex of rope ladders, tunnels, ziplines,





▲  
Pasta dishes and small plates at *Cantina 229*, a global-fusion restaurant on a farm in New Marlborough.

swinging wooden steps, and balancing wires has been constructed high in the trees. From a central platform, eight trails lead in different directions, each with a variety of obstacles and levels of difficulty. We climbed, swung, crawled, shimmied. We were clamped onto guide cables, so I never felt afraid. Indeed, how could I look down, when all of my wits were concentrated on overcoming the next challenge? I may have never felt so far from my everyday worries.

We completed two or three moderately challenging courses, and I said to myself, *I've got this*. Then we came to the end of the Flying High Trail: a pedestal 45 feet off the ground. I looked around. No steps back to the forest floor, nothing but empty space underneath us. The only way down was to hook myself onto a retractable pulley and jump, as though skydiving. The 12-year-old behind us offered to demonstrate—"I've done this a bunch of times," he explained before clamping himself to the pulley and flinging himself backward. Caleb went next, shouting an obscenity into the sylvan glade. Then it was my turn. I think I actually cried a little, but after a moment's free fall, the pulley clicked into action and delivered me to the ground as softly as a feather.

## The Best of the Berkshires

### Where to Stay

Imagine a Scandinavian summer camp for adults, and it might look like **Tourists** ([touristscheckin.com](http://touristscheckin.com); doubles from \$269). The 48-room motel in North Adams augments its spare but sybaritic rooms with a wooded property to wander. The five-room **Inn at Kenmore Hall** ([theinnatkenmorehall.com](http://theinnatkenmorehall.com); doubles from \$375), in Richmond, gives a contemporary update to classic bed-and-breakfast style. **Blantyre** ([blantyre.com](http://blantyre.com); doubles from \$645), in Lenox, has the feel of a grand manor. In 2018, a face-lift brightened its 23 rooms, and seasonal pop-ups, like a recent one with chef Daniel Boulud, keep things fresh.

### What to See

In addition to a permanent collection that ranges from the fifth century B.C. to the present, the **Clark Art Institute** ([clarkart.edu](http://clarkart.edu))—which reopened this summer after shutting for a few months—hosts intriguing temporary exhibitions; timed-ticket shows on Norwegian visionary painter Nikolai Astrup and the sculptors Claude and François-Xavier Lalanne are planned for 2021. The Massachusetts Museum of Contemporary Art, or **MASS MoCA** ([massmoca.org](http://massmoca.org)), is housed in a former factory; its size offers space for massive installations as well as social distancing. Work off the hours you've spent on contemplative museum-going at **Ramblewild** ([ramblewild.com](http://ramblewild.com)), an aerial-adventure park in Lanesborough. Or take a hike up **Monument Mountain**, just north of Great Barrington, or **Mount Greylock**, in Adams.

### Where to Eat

Walk into the **Old Inn on the Green** ([oldinn.com](http://oldinn.com); entrées \$28–\$46), in New Marlborough, and you'll feel like you've been transported to the 18th century, but the exquisitely prepared food is of the moment. Just down the road, **Cantina 229** ([cantina229.com](http://cantina229.com); entrées \$20–\$36), which occupies a glass pavilion on a farm, is casual, friendly, and delightful, with a menu that highlights Josh Irwin's inventive blend of global flavors. **No. 6 Depot** ([sixdepotcafe.com](http://sixdepotcafe.com)), in West Stockbridge, serves excellent sandwiches and coffee. — P. T.







Breakfast of a rye waffle  
and yogurt with granola at  
a window seat in a Tourists  
guest room.

**WE WERE** pleasantly exhausted by the time we arrived at the Inn at Kenmore Hall. A Revolutionary War soldier built the house in 1792; nearly a century later it became a boarding school, and later still a guesthouse popular with composers and musicians visiting Tanglewood, including Leonard Bernstein. In 2018, Frank Muytjens, previously the menswear director of J. Crew, and his partner, Scott Edward Cole, a former restaurateur, reopened the property as a bed-and-breakfast. Stripping away the grannyish décor associated with the genre, they've created a 21st-century version of a New England inn—less *Yankee*, more *Architectural Digest*.

Our second-floor room was painted a dark, calming gray that matched a plush sofa, and was furnished with a white marble fireplace, a Finn Juhl chair that Caleb was so taken with he started pricing it online, and a pile of art books that included Fairfield Porter, Herb Ritts, and Edward Weston. Our bathroom was Goth-chic: black walls, candles, and antique mirrors, with a deep tub in the center. The windows overlooked the sweeping lawns behind the house, where every so often I would spot Dutch, the affectionate resident Vizsla, loping around. The inn stands at a quiet intersection in the middle of tranquil farmland—there's not much immediately nearby, but no other part of the Berkshires is very far away.

Muytjens recommended two restaurants in New Marlborough, a small village a 45-minute drive away, and Caleb and I visited them on consecutive nights. The clapboard building that houses the Old Inn on the Green has been around since the mid 18th century, and the dining room looks uncannily frozen in time. (Caleb remarked that it was like being allowed to eat dinner in one of the period rooms at the Met.) The floorboards creak, the Windsor chairs encourage good posture, and the tables are lit solely by candlelight. The cuisine (Continued on page 101)



# S K A T I N G      A W A Y



▲  
*Skaters on Ottawa's Rideau Canal, which in winter becomes the world's longest ice rink.*





Gliding across ice beneath a clear winter's sky offers a sense of exhilaration like no other, as writer and illustrator **LEANNE SHAPTON** learns on a mother-daughter escape to Ottawa.





On her 1971 album, *Blue*, a heartsick Joni Mitchell sings: “Oh I wish I had a river I could skate away on.” The sleeve of *Hejira*, a later album, shows a Joel Bernstein photograph of Mitchell gliding across Wisconsin’s Lake Mendota in a black skirt, shawl, and men’s skates. Mitchell is Canadian, as am I, and loves to skate, as do I.

“I wish I had a river so long/I would teach my feet to fly.” The song loops in my head as I sign my six-year-old daughter out of school a few hours early to catch a flight from New York City to Ottawa. It’s mid-February, and I want to take her skating on the Rideau Canal—the oldest man-made waterway in North America, and a UNESCO World Heritage site. “It’s almost five miles long,” I tell her. “The world’s biggest ice-skating rink.” I want to teach her feet to fly, too.



OTTAWA, THE CAPITAL OF Canada, is usually seen as a square, political town, one that features in history lessons and seventh-grade overnight trips—a little like the way Washington, D.C., is seen by the rest of America. But it’s a rewarding place to revisit as an adult. A city of more than a million,

Ottawa is bilingual and ethnically diverse, with a visible First Nations population.

There are daily demonstrations and outraged opinion pages, signs of a healthy sense of civic freedom. Despite the Gothic green-gabled buildings of Parliament and the many excellent museums, the city lacks pretension and, instead, has more of a Bob and Doug McKenzie sense of principled self-deprecation. (If you don’t know who Bob and Doug are, I urge you to stop reading and stream *Strange Brew*, their beer-burping interpretation of *Hamlet*.)

We’re staying at the Fairmont Château Laurier, a grand hotel that sits near where the Rideau Canal meets the Ottawa River, which divides French-speaking from English-speaking Canada. The property is named after Canada’s seventh prime minister, Wilfrid Laurier, and is one of a string of properties built at the turn of the 20th century along the then-burgeoning Canadian National Railway. The Château is a massive, turreted building, with Tiffany-glass windows, vast chandeliers, and endless carpeted hallways.





THE WIND AT MY BACK  
PUSHES ME ALONG  
AS I GLIDE, A FEELING  
LIKE SAILING,  
OR FLYING.

Our suite is the size of my New York apartment. It has a small tower alcove, a fireplace, and infinite closets. I look up some archival photos of the hotel. The décor in the pictures reminds me of the handsome, oak-paneled staterooms on the *Titanic*. This isn't necessarily a coincidence. The man who commissioned the construction of the hotel, Charles Melville Hays, president of the Grand Trunk Railways, went down with the ship on his way home to Canada for the Château's opening in 1912. His cargo is said to have included furnishings for the hotel.

WE WAKE to a forecast of -13 degrees. After breakfast (*shakshuka*, oatmeal, coffee) we layer on leggings, snowsuits, and mittens. I stuff hand warmers into my pockets for later, and we take (Continued on page 100)

▲ Clockwise from bottom left: Skaters on the canal; the Fairmont Château Laurier hotel; ice-hockey players near the Laurier Avenue Bridge.





(Ottawa, continued from page 99)

a quick cab ride to the skate rental at Dow's Lake, which adjoins the Rideau Canal. Because of the temperature, not many skaters are out, and the ice seems vast, smooth, blinding in the sunshine. My daughter takes a few steps in her skates and freaks out, so I rent a little cutter—a wooden sled on thin skis—to push her along. At this, she is delighted.

We come across scenic medians dotted along the ice: piles of snow on which the city has set up discarded Christmas trees to create small forest scenes. After 15 minutes or so, we scrape to a stop at one of the designated rest areas along the route, where a wood-burning stove throws enough heat for us to take our hoods down. From a kiosk I fetch my daughter a BeaverTail, a flat, deep-fried piece of dough dusted in cinnamon sugar.

We set off again, the air like a blade on my cheeks. The speed we gather is particular to skating; it's nothing like running, or if it is, it's

like running downhill, on fresh green grass. I slow to catch my breath, from both exertion and exhilaration. My daughter twists around in her chair. "Can we go swimming?" She means in the pool at the hotel, a high-ceilinged, marble-and-tile Art Deco gem. I think of the humid air, and nod.

A COUSIN OF MINE who lives in Ottawa had told me about his "Shwarmageddon" dinner parties and recommended the city's Lebanese food. So lunch is falafel, tzatziki, and poutine at Oh My Grill, a new takeout spot run by Ali Al-Tawil, the son of Lebanese immigrants, in the ByWard Market. My daughter gushes over how delicious her bottle of Lipton iced tea is, and hand to heart, I have never had a better falafel sandwich. I ask Al-Tawil why it's so good. "It's my mother's recipe," he says. "She has a marinade and uses these," he adds, pointing to a can of seasoned bread crumbs on a shelf. The tzatziki is served with thick Greek pita, and Al-Tawil's presentation makes it irresistible.

Ottawa's Lebanese population boomed after their civil war began in 1975, when Canada set up special programs to expedite emigration. The city also has a large Vietnamese community, thanks to Canada's humanitarian response to the Southeast Asian refugee crisis in the late 1970s and early 80s.

That night we order noodles and bubble tea from Saigon Pho, which

I pair with the Château's mini-bar red. Fat snowflakes swirl past our windows. Across the street is a grand, turn-of-the-century government building with a sign that reads simply NATIONAL HEADQUARTERS.

I go to bed with a feeling familiar from growing up half-Filipino in a suburb of Toronto: British subject outside, outsider inside. I think back to my visits to Nepean, a suburb of Ottawa, for swim meets as a teenager. I'd come a couple of times a year, stay in a hotel with other girls, discover a new independence. Somehow, in that different setting, I'd always improve on the lap times I recorded back in the green-tiled university pool. It's been an important, symbolic place to me, and I'm happy to be here now with my daughter, my family.

The temperature goes up a few degrees on our last day. We've arrived in Ottawa in time to catch the end of Winterlude, the city's annual ice festival. There are tube rides down slides carved out of packed snow, ziplines, igloos, drums, and snow lollies made with maple syrup. The rink is busy. I leave my daughter at a canalside café with her cousins and a mug of cocoa, and go for a solo skate. This time I head downtown, slicing through the Glebe, Sandy Hill, and Old Ottawa East neighborhoods, past inlets and creeks, beneath bridges.

The wind at my back pushes me along as I glide, a feeling like sailing, or flying. Joni was right: a river is the best place to skate away, from America, from my own puny woes, the liars and the bullies, the grief and the loss. I return pink-cheeked to my daughter, and we pack up to visit friends on Meech Lake, a summer resort spot just across the river in Quebec.

We find the lake frozen solid and carpeted with snow. As the sun sets we strap snowshoes to our feet. "I'm walking to the other side and back," my daughter insists, and sets off in her full-face balaclava and snowsuit. A single cross-country skier flies past and waves as we cross the ice beneath a pink and purple sky. ✦

## A Wintry Weekend in Ottawa

The **Fairmont Château Laurier** ([fairmont.com](http://fairmont.com); doubles from \$190) is the classic place to stay: the imposing architecture and ornate guest rooms have earned the hotel the nickname "Ottawa's

Castle." The **Rideau Canal Skateway** ([ottawatourism.ca](http://ottawatourism.ca)) operates from February to mid-March, depending on the weather. Rent skates from the pavilion on Dow's Lake, at the canal's southwestern end, before gliding down the frozen five-mile waterway. Warm up over lunch at **ByWard**

**Market** ([byward-market.com](http://byward-market.com)), where you'll find some of the best food stalls and specialty stores in town—including the transcendent **Oh My Grill** (169 York St.; 613-562-4545; entrées \$5–\$12). **Saigon Pho** ([saigonphoottawa.ca](http://saigonphoottawa.ca); entrées \$10–\$19) serves excellent, authentic Vietnamese food.





(Berkshires, continued from page 95)

is classic American with a French slant: pan-roasted halibut, cauliflower soup, *pot de crème*, all excellent.

The next evening, we found a very different scene just a fraction of a mile down the road. Cantina 229 is a farm-to-table restaurant where the farm is directly beneath your feet. After parking in a clearing and walking through a meadow of wild raspberries and morning glories, past some chickens and ducks having an evening amble behind the farmhouse where owners Josh and Emily Irwin live with their family, we came to the restaurant, a modern wood-and-glass pavilion. There we were seated on a broad open-air deck overlooking the surrounding fields. The atmosphere was relaxed and convivial; Roxy Music and the Psychedelic Furs played over the sound system.

Everything that came out of Josh's kitchen was not only deeply flavorful but ingeniously concocted: a fat scallion pancake topped with tangy kimchi; a ball of *burrata* dolloped with pesto and served over toasted carrots; tender scallops in a curry cream sauce; a spicy vegetable pasta. I'm the kind of person who can enjoy every bite of a meal but is still secretly just waiting for dessert, and I was rewarded with the best ice cream I've ever tasted. Cantina 229 makes its own soft serve, and

on that night, the featured flavors were cinnamon toast crunch, a strikingly accurate homage to the breakfast cereal, and chocolate infused with mint straight from the garden. I finished my meal content in stomach and soul.

Josh's goals are humble. "Cantina to us is just a watering hole," he told me. "It's a meeting place for our people here in New Marlborough, and anybody else who wants to join our little community is more than welcome." I'm convinced that the Irwins' achievement is far greater. With their openhearted sense of fun and a menu that playfully mixes up flavors from different culinary cultures, they've made this quiet corner of the state feel emphatically connected to the rest of the world.

**IT HAD** turned overcast and misty, fitting weather to check in to Blantyre, a 110-acre estate on the outskirts of Lenox. The Tudor Revival manor at its heart, built in the first years of the 20th century for a single family, was modeled after the clan's ancestral seat in Scotland. The building looks baronial, with ivy-covered turrets and a music room bookended by fireplaces. But the hotel isn't resistant to a bit of whimsy. A wooden statue of a bear hides a Tesla charging station. "And your keys are in the bunny bowl," the porter said after showing us our room, pointing to a brass *vide poche* in the shape of a rabbit rowing a dinghy.

The hallways are lined with bookshelves, and it took forever to walk to our room because Caleb was always stopping to pick up *The Oxford Book of English Verse*, or a monograph on Byzantine art in Italy. Blantyre was recently given a thorough renovation, and our room harked back to classical styles of

decorating while still feeling fresh and bright.

We ate dinner in the handsome glass conservatory, and as we sat down I was overcome by a feeling of security: the crisp autumn night outside the windows, the warm Parker House rolls, the two couples at the next table recalling their favorite Neil Simon plays.

"This is pure New England," I said.

"No, it's not," Caleb corrected me. "If it were, it would be drafty and austere, and people would be making us feel bad for something we hadn't done."

**THE TOWN** of Lenox has largely withstood any attempts to be too on-trend, as we discovered the next day, when we swung through—the shopping streets looked unchanged since the years when my bus stopped there. We drove on to the two-road town of West Stockbridge, where we fortified ourselves with panini at No. 6 Depot, a deservedly popular café, before tackling Monument Mountain, on the outskirts of Great Barrington. At 1,640 feet, the peak makes for a moderately effortful hike. From the top Caleb and I surveyed the surrounding countryside, blanketed to the horizon in shades of honey and rust. (Herman Melville and Nathaniel Hawthorne first met when they picnicked with some friends there in 1850, which led to one of American literature's great man-crushes.)

Back at Blantyre, I hunched over my phone, scrolling through listings of local restaurants we could try. Finally I gave up pretending. "I really just want to go back to Cantina 229," I said. So we did, and the meal was every bit as good as the previous one.

As we got up to leave, Josh came out of the kitchen to say hello. Overcome, I threw my arms around him in gratitude.

"Was that weird?" I asked Caleb on the way out to the car. "I hugged the chef."

"It's okay," he said. "Sometimes you hug the chef." +

Content in this issue was produced with assistance from Blantyre; Hôtel Chais Monnet & Spa; the Inn at Kenmore Hall; Ottawa Tourism; Sound View Greenport; Tourists; and the Vienna Tourism Board.





(Vienna, continued from page 81)

the Austrian province of Burgenland, all on a bed of crispy Sichuan leeks.

If this new Vienna were in need of an ambassador, it couldn't ask for a better one than Ellie. Greek-born and U.K.-educated, Ellie spent her childhood traveling the world on container ships with her engineer father. She co-owns a Vienna-based design firm, but her defining passions are food and drink, especially olive oil, for which she's currently developing

a flavor chart for the labels of artisanal bottles, to educate numbskull Americans like me in the subtleties of flavor and bouquet.

Ellie is a passionate and demanding eater and drinker, to say the least, and as recently as the turn of the millennium she might have had a hard time adjusting to life in Austria's capital. To my surprise, however, Ellie actually thinks of herself as a local. "I feel at home here," she told me, when I pressed her to explain. "I'm not Austrian, of course—not even close. But, in some bizarre way, I am Viennese."

There's a word in the German-speaking world—*Wahlheimat*—for which I've never found a precise equivalent in English. Put simply, it means a homeland that you've chosen for yourself, regardless of your own history and origins. Listening to Ellie talk with such affection about the city that she's claimed as her own,

I was reminded of something I've sometimes said about New York. For me, one of the great wonders of my adopted hometown is that anyone can spontaneously naturalize themselves as a New Yorker—and, most importantly, that the city will generously indulge them. In that sense, New York is the ultimate *Wahlheimat*, and this, perhaps more than any other quality, is the secret of its perennial allure.

But never in my life would I have thought that someone—some outsider, some immigrant—could possibly think or feel that way about Vienna. On that bittersweet last night in the city, looking out from the balcony of my room at the Bristol over the copper-roofed expanse of the opera house and the glittering lights of the Ring, I found myself in the grip of an emotion that my teenage self would have been astonished by: the sudden temptation to stay. ✦

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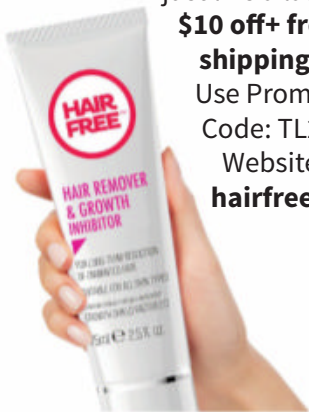
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## YOUR BEST SHOT

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**“‘OI,’ I CALLED TO MY BOYFRIEND** as he sipped yak-butter tea in our mountainside hut. He came to the door and I snapped a quick shot, capturing this much needed moment of reprieve. We had just arrived at a tiny village near the Kali Gandaki River, in Nepal, after three days of hiking the surreal landscapes of the Upper Mustang, in the remote Himalayas. We were tired and sore: believe it or not, I hadn’t brought proper hiking shoes for the expedition. But the chilly air was energizing and the smell of *dal bhat*—steamed rice and lentil curry—simmering on the wood-fired stove filled me with so much joy.”

**— READER ZOE OSBORNE ON HER PHOTOGRAPH, SHOT WITH A NIKON D7200, NOVEMBER 2018**

Zoe Osborne was an entrant in our ongoing Photo of the Day contest. Submit your best shots at [travelandleisure.com/photos/photo-of-the-day](http://travelandleisure.com/photos/photo-of-the-day) for the chance to be featured on this page in a future issue.



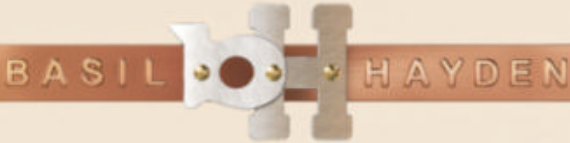
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